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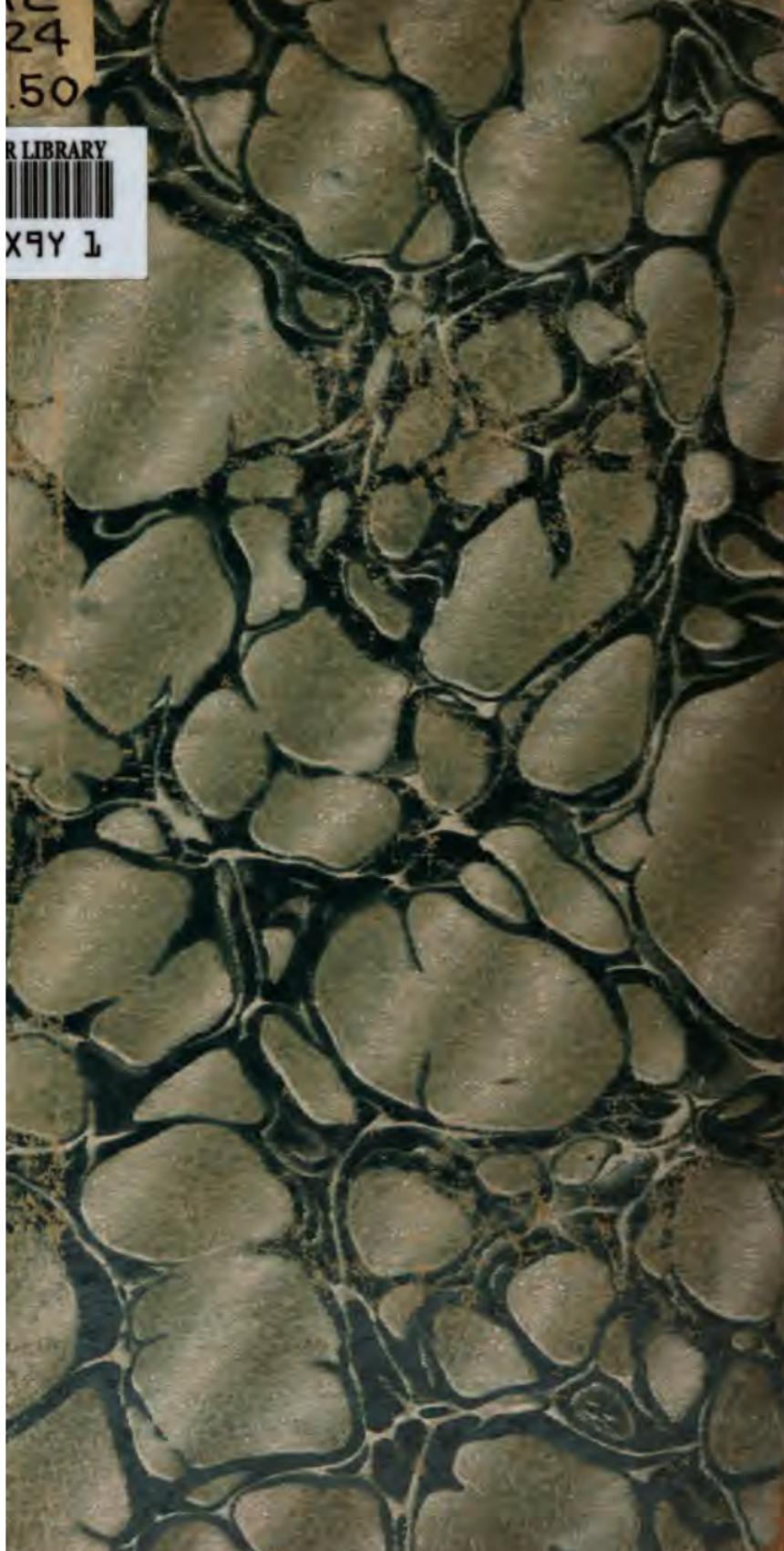
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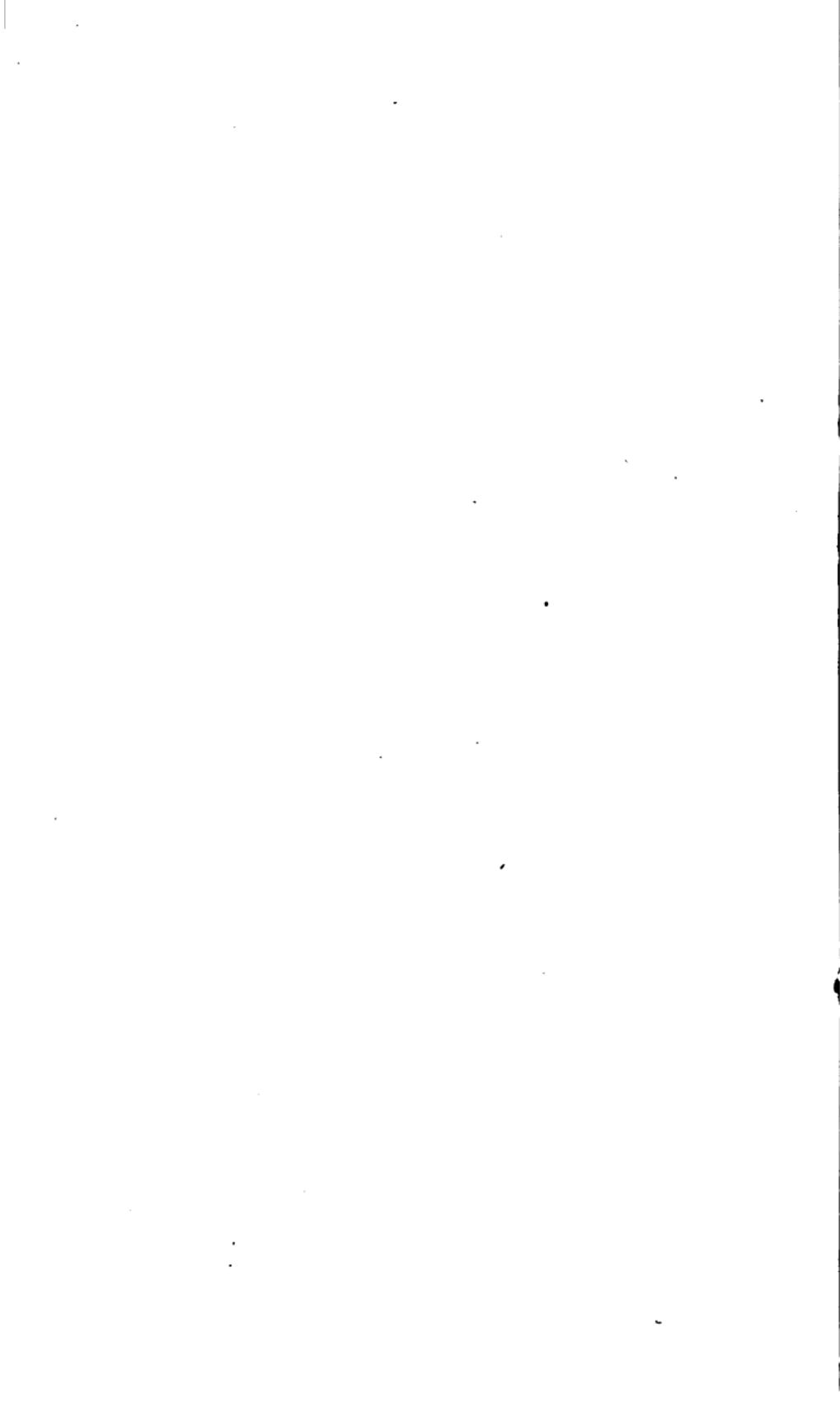
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THE BEQUEST OF
EVERT JANSEN WENDELL
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THE

MODEL HOUSE.

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

ALBANY, N. Y.:
PRINTING HOUSE OF C. VAN BENTHUYSEN & SONS.
1868.

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HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY

FROM PERSONS REPRESENTED.

THE BEQUEST OF
EVERT JANSEN WENDELL

JOB FISH. Master of the house—a retired manufacturer of large fortune.

REV. HABAKUK HYACINTH—of the Millerite persuasion—whose cravat is whiter than his heart.

CAPT. FRANK LOYAL—Officer in the late civil war, in love with Grace Fish.

BENAJAH BROWN—Fish's neighbor and friend.

WILLIAM FISH—Son of Job—a Soldier from Andersonville prison, in love with Sarah Brown.

WATSON WISP—Husband of Mrs. Wisp—a diminutive man,—very.

SOLOMAN SOFTLY—President of the Young Men's Auritus Association, addressing Grace.

JOHN CODE—an honest Lawyer, Counsel of Fish.

WOODEN NUTMEG—a Yankee—Conservator of the House, and busy-body in general.

CONTRABAND CUSSE—a Freedman, sent from Lookout Mountain, by Capt. Loyal.

PINHEAD—Fish's small Farmer.

FRED. FREELOVE—an admirer of Mrs. Wisp.

MUNCHAUSSEN LAGERBIER—Gardener.

DOCTOR SIMILIBUS—Family Physician of the Homœopathic persuasion.

TIM TRUMPET—Usher, &c.

MRS. FISH—Wife of Job—a lady of neglected education and simple mind.

GRACE FISH—her Daughter, in love with Capt. Loyal.

SARAH BROWN—Sweetheart of Wm. Fish.

BLANDINA WISP—a strong-minded Woman.

MRS. GRUNDY—a stately and notorious character.

SUSAN SMITH—victim of Rev. Habakuk Hyacinth.

LAVINIA WISP—Daughter of the strong-minded, and flame of Nutmeg.

MRS. BROWN—Wife of Benajah—a plain, good woman.

Maid Servants, &c., &c.

THE
MODEL HOUSE.

A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—PLACE—*The Suburbs of New York—A Splendid Villa, with all modern improvements, including a Chapel—a Model House.* TIME—*New Year's day, during the first part of the late Civil War.*

MRS. FISH and GRACE, and characters making New Year's calls on them, in a parlor—Curtain rises, revealing TIM TRUMPET in the ante-room to the parlor.

TIM. Well, this is to be a great day, sure enough ! A new year and a new house come together. The new year is rayther an old affair, and I dare say it won't be any thing very great ; but the new house—that is great though ! Such parlors—and such a library ! I don't care for the books, as I never was plagued with larnin', but the furniture and the cases—wall, I never seen the like ! The kitchen is sublime ! arranged for a cook and laundress, and their deputy assistants, and-settery, and-so-forth ;

but my eyes ! they are as grand and as cross as the very old d—— ! (*stops suddenly*) I must not say a naughty word, for there is a Chapel in the house, where the Rev. Habakuk Hyacinth and my mistress, Mrs. Fish, pray unceasing. What a man *he* is, to be sure ! He exhorted us all, the other evening, on love ; insisted on't that we must love one another. He said it was a new commandment, but I guess it is rather an old affair with him, for if he do'nt love Susan Smith — (*I have a notion of keeping the commandment in respect of her my own self*) then why did I catch him a kissing on her, just as the gas was turned off, after the beneficition, tother night ! (*shakes his fist at an imaginary white cravat*). I can't love two sweethearts to won'ct ; but then I a'nt gifted like Habakuk. Mrs. Fish says his gifts are truly remarkable, and I guess it's true. He sartainly has the gift of gab ; and Mr. Softly says he is greatly gifted in prayer. I'm no judge of such things, but my friend Nutmeg says —

Enter WOODEN NUTMEG.

NUTMEG. Who's a gratin' Nutmeg here ? I can't be hetchelled much by a Trumpet, eny how. What's up ?

TIM. I was soliquoising on gifts and prayer, and what you and them all thought of the Rev. Habakuk Hyacinth.

NUTMEG. Wall, you might have been more worthier employed, by a darned sight. But I say, Tim

Trumpet, what is the difference between you and a tin dinner horn? Give it up, for lack of larnin'? 'Cause, the clark at your baptism mistook *Tin* for *Tim*, and so you was written down plain Tim, when it should ought to been *tin*,—as your venerable parents sounded your name to the minister.

TIM. Wa'll—it's precious little of the tin I've got anyhow, or Susan Smith and I—

NUTM. None of your nonsense about a tin wed-ding. Who ever heerd of a tin wedding for the fust one? Get eaout, Tim! You aint half civilised, you critter. But stir about now; it's about time for them callers in kids. I'm on dooty—being around generally. Do you go to the door and Trumpet in the company. [Exeunt, severally.

Doors of parlor open and discover Mrs. FISH and GRACE prepared for New Year's calls—Refreshments spread out, &c.

Enter MR. BROWN.

BROWN. My dear Mrs. Fish, a happy New Year to you; and may you have many blissful returns; and Miss Grace, may I not extend the same kind wishes to you?—hoping that the new year may find you a happy bride. [Grace blushes and curtesies.

MRS. FISH. I am much obligeed to you, neighbor Brown. How is Mrs. Brown and Sally? I rayther guess Sal. is as much in the marryin' line as my gal, ef she thinks as much of our soger boy as he does

of her. Wa'll, a happy new year tu ye, at any rate—and may your shadder never be lost.

GRACE. Be less, you mean, mother.

MRS. FISH. I suppose you know my meaning bettern I du. That comes of your sculing ; but you'll soon hev a new master, when Capt. Frank Loyal cums hum a Majority-General.

GRACE. Mother, if any body were present but our our good neighbor, Mr. Brown, I should be grieved at your revealing our family secrets.

BROWN. There are no secrets between our houses. (*To Mrs. Fish.*) Since I consented to the proposal of your dear soldier boy, for the hand of my daughter, I have felt that our families were almost one.

MRS. FISH. Well, our houses are not almost one, for oun 's a sight the biggest. But, la ! Mr. Brown, that ain't nothin', I was once as poor as you, but I never felt homely for all that—nor I would n't ef I was you. Job says an honest man 's the noblest of all critters ; and I know you 're an honest man, for Habakuk says you air. [Brown bows and steps aside.

Enter HABAKUK HYACINTH.

(*Aside.*) Wa'll, they du say, the Old Scratch is alus around when you 're a speakin' on him ; but I did n't know afore that that implied to saints.

HAB. Ladies, you have been spared to see another New Year's day. For this, it is to be hoped, that

you are duly thankful. It may be the last that either you or your humble servant (and the servant of a Higher still, I humbly trust), will ever be allowed to behold. In view of which, may I be permitted to call your attention from the vanities of this present world, and to fix your gaze on Heaven.

MRS. FISH. Wa'll, of course. Ever sens I read Mr. Hyacinth's track on the pendulous instruction of the world,—which had a sight of good readin' into it,—I have been repairin' for the twenty-third of April—the disappointed day—and I hope that my fixin's are no way tu be despised. My Ascension Robe is made of the very most expensivest materials—lined with silk at twenty dollars a yard—and with a hood that is reckoned a perfect booty.

HAB. (*Groans and turns to Grace.*) Young woman, be thou also ready !

GRACE. My good sir, my preparations are of a very different kind, I assure you. I hope to be married before the world comes to an end—which seems to be no secret in this neighborhood.

HAB. Prepare for the bridegroom, who is to come quickly—; not in the character of a carnal Captain, but—

Enter WATSON WISP.

WISP. My dear, delightful Mrs. Fish—a—and sweet Miss Grace—a—I beg to be permitted—to—a—wish you a happy New Year ! It is—delightful. It is—a—however very cold.

MRS. FISH. Wa'll—I reckon the thrometer is below Nero.

WISP. Nero—ah ! yes ! He must—a—have been benumbed—which may account for a—his insensibility—a—to the pain—a of others. (*Winking, as at a good joke.*) I almost turned over—a—on the way—a—and almost swore—I declare. (*Looks at Hab. and is startled.*) But how are you—dear delightful—? I am so glad—a—to call alone. Not that Mrs. Wisp—a—is any embarrassment. Oh ! for God's sake—no ! (*Looks at Hab. and puts hand on mouth.*) But I have—a—difficulty—a—in speaking in her presence—; she is so superior—you know,—a—so transcendental—so sublime—as one might say. Was n't I a happy dog—to ally myself—to such a talented—powerful—a—and I might say—

HAB. (*Turning on him with a frown.*) You might say—strong-minded woman—infidel—advocate of woman's rights and free lover !

WISP. I protest—I—a—beg pardon, reverend and very dear sir—very dear indeed—a—permit me—a—one word. Is not that—a—coming it rather strong ?

HAB. Peace, little man ! The end draweth nigh !

[*Wisp retires to the refreshment table, with Brown and Hab., the latter lays in the fluids largely.*

Enter SOFTLY.

SOFTLY. Ladies, a happy New Year, and many, many returns ! I should not have come out this severe day, except for the most pressing reasons. (*Looking sweetly at Grace.*) My dear Mrs. Fish, when I visited your grounds last Summer—

MRS. FISH. That was at our Pickwick, before our new house was dun.

SOFTLY. Dear madam, yes—; when for the first time—but I hope not for the last—I saw your sweet daughter—and had the happiness to traverse with her a portion of your delightful grounds ; Oh ! I never can forget that day ! [*Looking at Grace and sighing, who pays no attention.*]

MRS. FISH. Wa'll, it's kind o' nateral for young folks to feel queer and sich. I remember when I read Mr. Goatee's Horrors of Wirtue—where the man was enymost killed by Charlot, if not quite—I felt so egostical—had such a quiveration in my limbs—and innard chills—that I du believe, ef Job Fish had not a proposed marriage right off—

GRACE. Mother, dear, I think you have sufficiently described your case. (*To Softly.*) Will you please to join the gentlemen at the refreshment table. [*Softly complies. Exeunt Hab. Brown and Wisp.*]

Enter CODE and DR. SIMILIBUS.

CODE. Well, my friends, a happy New Year ! Are you all well, and is my old friend, Job, all right ?

[*Similibus whispers Grace, who blushes*

MRS. FISH. Quite well, I thank you, and I hope you air the same. Is there any news? I've heard say, that Queen Victory had had the Life of Prince Albert taken; but I s'pect there ain't no truth into it.

CODE. Had his life *written*, I believe.

MRS. FISH. Wa'll, there ain't a great deal of difference, sometimes, I s'pose.

DR. SIMIL. Taking life is in the line of my profession, as the vulgar say; so the biographers do not enjoy a monopoly of that. But my dear madam, my patients call me away, and I must attend to suffering humanity; so adieu! [Offering to go.

MRS. FISH. Oh, do n't go so soon! Wa'll, ef you must, you must. Cum agin; 't ain't fur, as we live right in the rhubarbs of the city. (A pause.) Oh! Doctor, stay! Have you got any Kissagain waters (*Kissengen meaning*)? I'm told they would du me good, and I could take 'em in bottles to hum, and save a goin' tu them waterin' places, which are *so* vulgar.

DR. SIMIL. It is not in my line, dear Madam. (*Kissing his hand to Grace.*) Instead of kissagain, in your case, I have not yet been blessed with the first.

GRACE. (Aside.) And never will be, with my consent. [Exit *Code and Simil.*

SOFTLY. (Advancing to Grace.) Is there no room for me to hope—a—that I may—hope—indeed—I would say—ah!—

[*Exeunt Mrs. Fish and Softly.*

Enter CAPT. LOYAL.

LOYAL. (*Rushing up to Grace and kissing her hand.*)
A happy, thrice happy, New Year to thee, sweet
Grace ! How charmingly you look, and what a
house you occupy ! You will think me unworthy
to claim my bride from such a stately palace, when
I come back from the war !

GRACE. My dear Frank, no !—and you ought to
be punished for suggesting such a thing. (*Archly.*)
I have a good mind to encourage Softly, and make
you jealous. He has just left, after being very
sweet toward me.

LOYAL. I beg pardon ; I'll trust my sweet Grace
against all the *Softlys* and all the *Hardlys* in the
universe. (*A pause.*) My darling, I am in the bustle
of preparation for my departure, to join the army
of the West ; to become a fellow soldier with those
gallant western men, who have been the first to
turn back the tide of treason and rebellion, and to
vindicate the right with their heart's blood. God
bless them !

GRACE. And I say—Amen ! But, oh ! that I could
be spared the pain of a separation from you, my
dear Frank ! I honor you for your devotion to your
country—even more than for your love of me ; and
yet my woman's heart will claim its own, in spite of
all my patriotism.

LOYAL. Cheer up, my Gracie ! The war will soon
be over ;—I shall return with honor, it may be—at

any rate with a sense of duty faithfully performed. I shall never cease to think of you while living—and if by any accident—

GRACE. For Heaven's sake, forbear ! The thought kills me ! (*A pause.*) But go, my dearest Frank ! Fight—aye—shed your blood for your country's salvation ; come back crowned with the laurels of victory, and the day of your return shall be our happy wedding day !

[*They embrace and exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*Neighbor Brown's House—A Sewing Society*—MRS. GRUNDY *sitting in State*—Enter to her MRS. BROWN, SARAH BROWN, MRS. WISP, *in Bloomer Costume*, with her DAUGHTER ; SUSAN SMITH, and HABAKUK—*Ladies then ply the needle busily.*

MRS. GRUNDY. Ladies, attend ! We are the most favored of womankind ! It is our happiness to have in our midst the great prophet of the earth's doom ; and to prepare him to grace the occasion which he foretells. How speed we with our pious labors ? Is the Ascension Robe, which your fair hands are preparing for our priest and prophet, nearly ready to encompass his earthly tabernacle ?

SUSAN SMITH. (*Meekly holding up the robe.*) It is nearly done ; a few more stitches, and he can try it on.

[*Hab sends forth a nasal groan.*

MRS. WISP. (*Derisively.*) What noise was that ? Somebody appears to be in pain. (*A pause.*) Are

there no poor people, destitute of clothing, whose wants might employ the needles of this admirable society?

MRS. BROWN. A plenty of them; but Mrs. Grundy, our excellent lady president, directed us, first to prepare for the coming end on the twenty-third of April.

MRS. GRUNDY. Let us be clothed with righteousness, as with a garment, and it matters little for our earthly rags. What we do is for effect. These robes will really give the last scene, a fine appearance.

[*Hab. groans again.*

MRS. WISP. (*Derisively.*) I insist on it; somebody is in pain, and ought to receive immediate attention!

HAB. (*Rising and looking daggers at Mrs Wisp.*) Madam! I *was* and *am* in pain; pain for a dying world; in pain for sinners like you!

MRS. WISP. You have a painful look—and a voice of distress. But come (*to the ladies*) let us see him gowned for Heaven. I should like to see him go up in that. (*Pointing to the robe which Susan Smith presents to Hab. to try on. Hab. puts on the robe with assistance.*) Quite the thing, I declare! (*Looking about the ears.*) Nothing unseemly appears to obtrude through this pious lion's skin. My decided opinion is, that on the appointed day Mr. Hyacinth will go up and go in with that graceful costume,

amid shouts of applause from admiring spectators !

MRS. GRUNDY. Madam ! the costume of the saint contrasts favorably with that of the sinner ! [Pointing to Mrs. Wisp's Bloomers.

MRS. WISP. I shall not change my chosen dress for the contemplated occasion. I shall enter Paradise in Bloomer costume, or stay out in the cold ?

HAB. You need not burden your husband with the expense of another suit. Yours seems entirely fit for the place where infidels and free lovers are likely to go. [Groans.

[*Exeunt Mrs. Fish, Grace, Mrs. Brown and Sarah.*

MRS. GRUNDY. Was ever such a stuck up, illiterate, vulgar creature as that Mrs. Fish ? They say, that when she bought some very expensive diamonds the other day, and in the transaction, had occasion to write her name, she actually made her mark !

MRS. WISP. Mrs. Fish is a well meaning woman, although not a scholar, as any body can see ; and I had rather she would make a thousand marks than follow every d— foolish fashion—wear hoops as big as a hogshead, and trains larger than a peacock's tail—as some people do. [Looking severely at Mrs. Grundy.

LAVINIA. Why, ma ! I think trains are very graceful and becoming, indeed !

MRS. GRUNDY. (*To Mrs. Wisp.*) Where did your daughter get her good sense and taste ?

MRS. WISP. From such as the celebrated Mrs. Grundy ; judging from their quality !

MRS. GRUNDY. I differ only from people who are filled with pride and self-conceit !

MRS. WISP. And you *agree* only with people who are stuffed with silly vanity !

MRS. GRUNDY. A truce, Madam Strong-minded ! The *Fishes* are on our hook now. What a palace ! And Fish, the cobbler, instead of calling it *The Old Shoe*, has had the assurance to christen it THE MODEL HOUSE ! Was the like ever known before ?

[*Hab. groans.*]

HAB. Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Job Fish does not believe in sacred things ; but his excellent wife does ; and on her account, I would have you forbear,—since we read that a believing wife sanctifies an unbelieving husband.

MRS. WISP. Mrs. Fish has complained of bad health for some time past, and is the more subject to imposture on that account. I have known women to get Dyspepsia, and to think that they had got religion !

[*Hab. groans.*]

HAB. Strong-minded women get infidelity and Bloomer costume, and think that they have got a “mission” !

MRS. WISP. And so they have ! Since we are in the tailoring line to-night, a mighty tailor has said, that instead of its taking nine tailors to make a man, it takes nine men to make a tailor. Let me rather say, that it requires a far greater number of canters

and snufflers to make either an honest man, or one strong-minded woman. [*Mrs. Grundy and Mrs. Wisp look daggers.*]

[*Exeunt all the ladies, save Susan Smith.*]

SUSAN. (*To Hab.*) It is not too late to fulfill your vow, and save me from utter disgrace and ruin ! Oh, how I have confided in you !—your sacred word—your great piety ! As you hope for Heaven—and in that robe, which my hands have mainly wrought, to grace your sacred person, go with me—make me your honored wife, and save me from a wanton's fame.

HAB. Out upon you, sinful woman ! I never promised you marriage. *You led me astray—entrapped and seduced me, and turned me from my holy calling into the path of sinners. Go hence ! The end draweth nigh !*

SUSAN. Did not promise marriage ! I seduced you ! By every holy vow and solemn appeal to Heaven, you promised ;—even called me your own dear wife—your sweet ewe lamb—and said, “it was no harm for the lambs of the Lord to play together !” These were your very words ! [*Weeps, and clings to Hab., who hurls her from him. Nutmeg seen in the back ground, listening.*]

[*Exeunt Hab. and Susan, severally.*]

Enter NUTMEG.

NUTM. (*Solus.*) This is a darned great country ! Great in its soil, climate, and animal productions !

(*A pause.*) Niagara falls though ! Habakuk—lamb of the Lord ! Why, the old cuss ! (*A pause.*) Poor Susan was not very cute—and Tim, my honest friend, you will begin life with some capital ;—a leetle—lamb—of—the—Lord ! Baa—a—a—a ! (*Imitating the cry of a lamb, nasally, like Hab.*) Wa'll, it is a darned great country, to be sure ! We invented the potater, got up the tomater, Ingin corn and maple sugar ; created the wild turkey, for the vegitable perductions ;—to say nothin' of the animal ones ;—the savage Ingins—the graceful rattlesnake —the odor'us skunk—tobaccer—Habakuk Hyacinth and hypercrits in general. Great in religi'n, for sartin ;—but whether that is a animal or vegitabal perduction, my almanac don't say. But it says in my gography, or I've seen it somewhers in a cookery book, that we Yankees have invented one or tew hundred religi'ns and only one sass.

[*Exit, humming a psalm tune.*

WORDS—"Let sinners take their course,
And choose the road to death," &c.

SCENE III.—*A Room in Code's Office, on Broadway, New York—Code seated and writing at desk.*

Enter Job Fish.

FISH. Good morning, my old friend ! and a happy New Year !

[*Code rises, and they shake hands heartily.*

CODE. I would wish you a hundred happy New Year's, if I did not see by the frost on your head,

that you could not afford to enjoy quite so great a number. But pray be seated, and let us have a good long talk. [They take chairs.

FISH. You are right, my dear Code, I could not afford quite so many years. The fact is, I am no longer young ; besides, my early hardships have told upon my constitution, and made me prematurely old. A man don't jump from a cobbler's stall to a castle without being strained and jolted, more or less, by the leap. I am beginning to hate winter—which is a sure sign of old age. Every year added to my life now, makes the cold more and more disagreeable. It is clear to my mind, that the frosts of age and those of winter do not mingle well together. Jack Frost is rather too rugged a play-fellow for an old boy. I have no longer any enterprise on snow or ice. I seek the easy chair and the chimney corner, with a strong inclination of the head towards a nod. Even new books do not interest me ; their fragrance is not as sweet and refreshing as of yore. My reading is rather of the newspapers. I care no more for fame —my own or anybody's. I want competence—ease —warmth—comfort—old friends—old wine and my old wife. I think unceasingly of the scenes of my boyhood—my parents, school fellows and old neighbors. These are far better and dearer than anybody now-a-days. I shun new acquaintances, avoid ceremony and parties of pleasure. I go out

of my way to avoid all lions and enterprising people. I would let well enough alone—would economize, and be prepared for losses. I frequently wonder if my son, William, will survive me—and if he should, whether he will ever make a dollar, or only live as a drone and spend the fruits of my industry and economy. I wonder, also, if Grace will marry well, or be the victim of some fortune-hunting prodigal ;—though I have no reason to doubt the sense and prudence of my son, or the good character of Captain Loyal, who, however, has no fortune but his sword.

CODE. And that will win his way, you may depend upon it. A braver fellow, or nobler man and patriot, has not entered our army since the outbreak of the civil war. But I perceive, by your account of yourself, that you are feeling old enough to take the precautions of an aged man, in respect of your estate. I must say, your funds are not invested quite to my satisfaction ; I would have you quit of all “ Presidents, Directors & Company ”;—there are so many knaves and humbugs among them—and have only Job Fish and John Code for the managers of your estate. I think we can trust those two—although one is a heathen and the other is a lawyer.

FISH. I know I am safe in your hands, at any rate. I will go out of the Companies, but what shall I do with my funds ?

CODE. Put one half on bond and mortgage, and invest the other half in United States bonds.

FISH. Good advice, no doubt. Mortgages are the best for me—but not for the government. I incline to put the whole in United States bonds. I have given my only son to the cause of my country;—are my dollars more precious than his blood? (*A pause.*) Poor fellow! I have not heard of him of late; his blood may have been yielded up ere this! [Brushes away a tear.]

CODE. God forbid, that I should stay your purpose, since it is so good! Take the bonds—put your all in them—and Heaven bless you and our country together.

[*They shake hands heartily, and exit Fish.*

CODE. (*Solus.*) These bonds are easily lost. Fire may consume them; but then Fish has a fire-proof safe in his new house, as it is thought. Thieves may take them; there is, however, some safeguard against them. We shall take a half million of dollars, for Fish's estate will not fall short of that, and for such a lift, and considering his great loyalty, the Secretary may consent to issue the bonds, payable to Fish's order only, which would make them valueless to a thief. I will, moreover, keep an exact registry of all the bonds, their number, date and amount, so as to be prepared for accidents. With these precautions, here goes for the bonds; and if John Code can protect and save an old friend from loss or damage, then shall Job Fish never have cause to regret, that in the hour of his country's

greatest peril, he invested his all in Uncle Sam's bonds.

[*Exit Code.*

SCENE IV.—*A room in The Model House—present Mrs. FISH dressed to death—and seated.*

MRS. FISH (*Looking at a picture—a landscape hanging up in the room.*) That, now, I call a picter. 'Taint every body that could buy that—nor 'taint every body that could paint it, nuther. Danl' Daub will go down with the remotest post-horses ! What fur shortning on them air critters—and what a color he's put onto them horses ! And then what trees, and lounds and lakes, he dimly shadders forth ! When I bought that pictur, I didn't let on to Job, till it was tied up agin the wall,—and then I tuk him in, to cricketcise it. My sakes alive ! how he stared, and talked about a fool and his money bein soon parted ;—or some sich.—He's so kind a crisp sometimes, I hardly know how to take him. So I said, " Wall, whether you like it or not, 'taint a bit more costive than a Mammal's Hair Shawl, and its twice as purty." Now, with all my stravagance, I haint bought one of them things for myself or Grace,—nor I dont mean tu. I call that wicked waste, which Habakuk says, leads to woffle want.

*Enter MRS. WISP on the arm of FREELOVE—
WISP following meekly.*

MRS. WISP (*to Mrs. Fish*) Allow me, Madam, to present my friend, Mr. Frank Freelove, one of the elect of the earth.

MRS. FISH.—Wall, I'm drudful glad to see Mr. Tealove, I'm sure. I suppose he's very fond of the bevrage. I like to see a man enjoy a cup of tea,—specially green tea ;—he alus seems to be so kind a innocent like. But pray take cheers and set down :—'taint every body that offers sich seats as these.

[*Wisp stands.*]

Do sit down, Mr. Wisp, there's no law agin it, I'm sartin. [*Wisp still stands.*]

FREELOVE. Most hospitable madam ! what a house—and what a presiding divinity ! Mrs. Wisp, whom I serve—unworthily—has often mentioned to me, your princely hospitality, in fitting terms of praise. And yet with all her talent of description—I must say—as Queen Victoria said to Solomon Swap, when he showed her his museum of Yankee curiosities—“the half has not been told to me !”

MRS. WISP. (*To Wisp.*) My poor pet, do come forward and be seated,—and dont play meek Moses so effectually.

WISP. (*Putting his hand on the back of a chair.*) Why—yes—really—I might as well, (*Gets timidly on one corner of the chair.*)—but really—Mrs. Fish—in the presence of that lady—my ever honored wife—I feel a—so perfectly diminutive, you know ;—a—she is so eloquent—has so much genuine talent, Such an eye—Oh ! what an eye, when excited by genius—or some fine passion—or sentiment that really—a—

MRS. FISH. I reckon that the bay mare is a leetle the best hoss, Mr. Wisp, dont you ?

MR. WISP. My excellent Mrs. Fish—really, I am not a judge of—a—horses,—that is—no great;—but of womankind, I fancy, I have some pretensions—a—to be considered—a—something of a judge—a—from the choice I made and consummated by my most remarkable—a—and felicitous union—a—with my own Mrs. Wisp.

FREELOVE. There I beg to say, Wisp, I am your rival, for the glory of a just appreciation—of the vast and incomprehensible merit of the lady in question.

WISP. Do you know, Freelove, that I make many sacrifices, in order to stand well with my adorable and ever dear Mrs. Wisp ? Why, I frequently—a—assist in the chamberwork—a—of our small establishment; and I have gone somewhat further. When our baby was quite young and tender—a—very tender indeed.—Mrs. Wisp had occasion—a—to lecture, and attend various philanthropic societies ;—and leaving me in charge of that tender infant—a—very tender indeed, she instructed me how to a—arrange—a—or fasten on—that—a—peculiar and precautionary—a—garment—or—a—linen swathe—which is always associated with tender infants—a—very tender indeed,—and—a—to change it—a—as often—a—as there should be—a—any occasion !

MRS. WISP. My poor pet ! That will do. They say it is the fashion in Paris at this time, to wear

the mouth slightly open ; but good soul, I think that yours is better entirely shut.

[*Shutting up his mouth.*]

FREELOVE. It is no wonder, that the great and glorious intellect of our dear Mrs. Wisp, flew from the regular duties of ordinary women, and rushed to the arena of popular philanthropy, to extort equality and justice from the reluctant vulgar.

MRS. WISP. Ah ! If ever woman shall be enfranchised—as I am sure she will at length be ;—will it be remembered my dear Freelove, that I was the leading lady, in the advocacy of woman's rights—in the setting forth of woman's mission—and in acts of noble daring and heroism, for the redemption of my fallen sex ?

FREELOVE. If I could, I would write a book to celebrate your merit—and water it with my tears !

MRS. WISP. But really, my sex has rights, and should be regarded as on an equality with men. Equality, in the estimation of the constitution—and before the law ;—that is what we urge, and that is simply just.

MR. WISP. There my dear, permit me to observe, that I think—a—you ask too little. Look at me, and then—a—if you please, survey yourself !

MRS. WISP. There it is ; the argument lies in a nutshell. Look ! (*Pointing to Wisp.*) He is a man, and I, (*Drawing herself up.*) am a woman ! “Look on that picture, and then on this !”

MR. WISP. Even so—a—only more so—I declare ! Nothing can be plainer. The idea of her honoring and obeying me—is—a—I venture to assert—a—perfectly preposterous ;—and so far—a—as I know —a—or justly remember at the present speaking— a—she has never done it !

[*Exeunt Mr. and Mrs. Wisp and Freelove.*

Enter NUTMEG.

NUTM. (*To Mrs. Fish.*) I have got tu go tu the city to-day—for one thing and nuther—and maybe I could do suthing for you ?

MRS. FISH. Wall—I dont know, that I've any errons to send fur—(*A pause.*) Oh, yes ! now I think on't, I have hearn tell of suthin that makes a wonderful quality of soap, in mighty short metre; what is it now ? oh, I think they call it consecrated lye.

NUTM. Wall, I try to git sum. (*Aside.*) I spose she wants it to make *soft* soap, and I reckon if any thing will make a fust rate *soft* artikul, that will.

Enter HAB. and SOFTLY.

Now we can git *consecrated lie* without goin' into the city shops arter it. (*Aside.*)

HAB. My dear Mrs. Fish, allow me to present my excellent friend and co-laborer in the vineyard of the Lord, Mr. Solomon Softly, President of *The Young Men's Auritus Association.*

MRS. FISH. Du tell ! wall, he's very welcum. I don't rightly know what the *All-righteous Association* is all about, but I know its somethin' good any how, by the name.

HAB. The profane scoffers have played on the name; but, my dear madam, *Auritus* is a Latin word, having reference to the *ear* and its general capacity. The young men of that Association are famous listeners to the preached word, and hence they are distinguished as having "*ears to hear*," which accounts for the name of their Association.

NUTM (*Aside.*) When I was a boy, and studid a leetle Latin in our district school, *auritus* meant *long-eared*, and I havn't hearn of any statut changin the meanin of the word.

[*Hab. overhears.*

HAB. I have heard you, scoffer ! [To Nutmeg.

MRS. FISH. (To Nutmeg.) You can be spared now.

NUTM. (*Whispers rather loudly in Hab's ears, and there is heard*) "Lamb of the Lord," "Susan Smith." (Hab. rages.)

[*Exit Hab., Softly, and Mrs. Fish.*

NUTM. (*To a tune.*)

" For seven long years I courted pretty polly,
Fal lal tural lal li tural liddle de da ;
But now I think its time for to be leaving off my folly.
Fal lal &c.

[*Exit Nutmeg.*

SCENE V.—*The Chapel of the Model House—Mrs. Fish in an ascension robe, sitting apart in front of pulpit—Nutmeg stowed away in secret—audience—servants, &c.*

Enter HABAKUK having on ascension robe, and takes the Pulpit.

HAB. Beloved hearers! the end draweth nigh. Had the dreadful day been fixed for the first day of April, the scoffers might have wagged their heads, and cried “April fool!” But what can their wicked tongues utter against the *twenty-third* of the same month! The venerable Miller, reading the prophecies by the light of Pine Knots, on the top of the highest mountain in Vermont, was at last given to see the day of doom; and he offered to bet any money that the world would be destroyed by fire on that very day; but not a scoffer of them all would take the bet. Then look ye to it! there is no time to be lost. Some are already prepared. That excellent lady (*Pointing to Mrs. Fish*) is an example for you all. Do not spare your money—for what is the value of filthy lucre now? Don’t save a sixpence and loose your soul. As you leave this place deposit in the box at the door, your respective mites. Thus will you swell the *Ascension Robe Fund*, and at your need the precious garment will be ready for each and all of you. I

now dismiss you, in the hope of a glorious ascension !

Audience rises, and going out, each makes a deposit in the box, reverently—Manet Mrs. Fish—Hab. advances to the box, pours the contents in his pockets eagerly, when he joins Mrs. Fish, and presses her hand to his lips.

NUTM. (*Concealed.*) Hokey - pokey, larry cum bump, heigho ! says Rowley ! (*in a deep voice, which startles Hab.—then, after a long listening pause—*

HAB. And is it true, my dearest madam, that your profane husband has actually settled on you a hundred thousand dollars, to be enjoyed in your own right ? If so, how vain, since the end is so near !

MRS. FISH. I don't know 'bout settlements and such ; but Job has put that amount of bonds in a green tin box, marked it as mine, and deposited it in the safe.

HAB. And has my darling access to that safe when she pleases ?

MRS. FISH. Why, la, yes ! Job keeps one key, and I t'other, and we both go in when we want to—I for my silver, and he for his papers.

HAB. Worldly minded man ! Does he think his poor safe will withstand the general conflagration on the day of doom ?

MRS. FISH. I don't know, but I've heerd him say he thought the safe was fire-proof ; and if it ain't, he'll sue the maker, I can tell ye.

HAB. Oh, what a sinner ! (*Groans.*)

NUTM. (*Concealed—acting as echo.*) Oh, what a sinner ! (*Groans.*)

[*Hab. is startled—a pause.*]

HAB. (*Lowering his voice.*) Have you ever thought of me as your dearest friend and almost lover ?

MRS. FISH. I fear I have too often thought of you in an *unjesely* way.

HAB. Un— what ? Pray, my dearest madam, where did you pick up that word ?

MRS. FISH. Wa'll, I've hearn *Molly*, our cook, use it.

HAB. (*Looking wicked, and winking to audience.*) That, then, reveals the ety-molly-gy of the word.

NUTM. (*Concealed—with a ghostly voice.*) Ha ! ha ! ha ! Ho ! ho ! ho !

[*Hab starts and pauses.*]

HAB. You know not how precious you are to your faithful shepherd. He dotes on you ; thinks of you as his graceful, gliding gold fish—nay, as his elegant electric eel !

MRS. FISH. Oh ! it is too much ! I shall go off ! What would Job say, if he only knew ? What would Mrs. Wisp—and oh ! what would Mrs. Grundy say ? You want me to se-lope with you, I know ;— I can't—I mustn't—not now !

NUTM. (*Concealed, and with awful solemnity.*) Swear-r-r-i-r !!!

HAB. Come, let us go. I fear we are discovered:

[*Exeunt.*]

NUTM. (*Coming out with a mock ascension robe on—dancing to an old tune, with the words*)—

“As I came home from Baltimore,
One foot behind and t’other before,
I told my my mother my feet was sore
A dancin’ on a sandy floor.”

[*Exit, and curtain falls.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A street—Nutmeg soliloquizing.*

NUTM. In love—by hokey ! Nothing else can account for my symtums—loss of sleep—lack of appetite—and fallin’ away into flesh. But oh ! she’s blamed purty—and so gentle—so more like her father than her mother—(which latter comes it rayther strong, I du say, for one of the feminine-female persuasion;) that I don’t think my tormentin’ little critter would ever come the strong-minded onto me; but ef she shud, I’d let her know suddinly who wore the onmenshinbles in our house, I tell ye ! That won’t go down—that shiftin’ of the nuther gairments from one sect tu another. But I won’t think on’t, ‘cause it’s no use, for it can’t be, that ever Laviny Wisp, who is sweeter’n’ maple sugar, a darned sight—or maple pack-wax either—should ever think of wearing (*looking at his pants*) any combustible that rightly belongs to another. I hev taken to readin’ of late—indulgin’ in the poetics mainly; though I

have read the *Sorrows of Werter* (*Horrors of Virtue*, the lamented Mrs. Fish called it, when she lent it tu me) onto my edification. I can't stand this much longer. Relief I must hev, or my biler'll bust, the pressure bein' a mite tu heavy for the machine. Poetry is a kind of safety-valve to the bust-in' heart—as Mrs. Fish says—and so I thought I'd try it on (*pulls out a paper*); and here is the consequence. Maybe when she reads it she'll feel like givin' me the advice given gratis to a western orator, who went the highfalutin turribly—which was : to pluck out sum feathers from the wings of his imagination, and tu stick 'em onto the tail of his judgment. But here goes, anyhow. (*Reads.*)

ODE TO LAVINIA WISP.

I.

“ My fondly flutterin’ heart, be still ! ”
 My tongue, a word dont lisp—
 While, like a sweet meand’rin’ rill,
 I run to VINEY WISP.

I had tu kind a shorten up her pritty name tu make the poetic feet ; but I couldn’t make ’em as short and graceful as hern. What dear little tooty footies she *has* got, by mighty ! I’d like to see a poetic feet that would match hern, anyhow. (*Reads.*)

II.

I run—but should she cruel prove,
 My bleedin’ heart to wound,
 I then should sartin die for love,
 And run—intu the ground.

That, I think, is good, now! A rill sometimes runs into the ground—so does a dead man. I go that figger strong. (*Winks and reads.*)

III.

“The lovely young LAVINIA
Once had friends”—they du say—
I rayther think she’s got one now
That’ll stick tu her, any way.

IV.

To win so bright a darlin’ creetur,
To enjoy so sweet a boon,
I’d willing be her NUTMEG grater,
Or even her WOODEN spoon!

Obsarve the pun! I might go on, but I may as well stop here as any wheres, for I could write till Dume’s day—or, any how, till the twenty-third of April, and not be half through then. It’s rayther a pity that the time is so short; for I can’t du justice to my theme in so limited a space.

Enter Miss WISP, as a school girl, with books, on her way to school.

Why, here you air! Oh! Miss Wisp, ef you would only let me call you “The lovely young LAVINIA once had friends”—how happy I should be! (*She stops in confusion.*) I’ve seen you long, and gloated on your charms! (*She attempts to go.*) Oh! stay, my leetle one—my precious—(*kneeling*). I’ll plead like a lawyer to gentlemen of the jury.

[*Rises.*

LAVINIA. Pray, let me go. Mamma says I must not listen to the tales of lovers, they are so false and deceitful.

NUTM. Sum air ; but this one *ain't*. Ef I don't really and truly love you, then there *ain't* no snakes.

LAVINIA. (*Alarmed.*) I hope there are none about here. Dear me ! how you frighten me !

NUTM. Git eaout ! You don't think I would allow sarpernts to glide along the path a angel treads, du you ? Ef I had been in Adam's place, the garden would have been kept purty free from snakes, I reckon ! It takes a *Yankee* to thin out them critters. But, see here (*taking out his lines*) : I express my convictions best on paper, and these lines por-tray my feelin's. Du obleege me by takin' on 'em. Read them with tears in your eyes, and send me a answer by return mail. Here's a stamp for the post-age (*offering one, which she rejects*).

LAVINIA. (*Taking the lines and going.*) La ! I can't write on so serious a subject—(*looking quite smitten*).

NUTM. Wa'll, don't make excuses—du write, ef you only say :

“ My pen is poor, my ink is pale,
My love tu you will never fail.”

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*A room in the Model House—Time, 23 April,
near nightfall—Present, Mr. and Mrs. Fish.*

FISH. The labor of the country has become as faithless as it is burthensome—in a word, a nuisance—and if Divine Providence were now arranging events so that *Americans* should all become their own servants, matters would hardly appear different from our present condition. Doubtless we should live longer, and be happier, on the whole, were we to serve ourselves—certainly busier, and probably more virtuous, since the idle are chiefly in the way of temptation; but we should not be so *genteel*, and—

MRS. FISH. How can you talk so? The idea of *my* cookin', washin' and ironin'! But I have often thought you'd ruther I'd du it than not.

[*Almost weeps.*

FISH. I remember when you did it all—at the old *Roadside Inn*, where, when I was a poor tramping jour. of a shoemaker, I used occasionally to refresh myself with a glass of ale; and where I concluded by refreshing myself with thee!

MRS. FISH. You air the most revokin' man I ever seen. To remind me of that now, when everybody else has forgotten it!

FISH. Forgotten it? There is not a soul of all our acquaintances but calls it to mind whenever he or she thinks of our persons, or looks at our house.

MRS. FISH. If I thought so, I should die—or go into knipsions, at the very least. But if we all did our own work, what would Mrs. Wisp—"what would Mrs. Grundy say?"

FISH. Nothing against it. On the contrary, they would be busy over the kitchen range, or the wash tub, themselves, and would be loud in their praises of the "dignity of labor." There would be no more "strikes," or "monthly notices." The mother alone till she had daughters—the father alone till he had sons,—then, father and sons, mother and daughters, together, would compose a family where the relation of master and servant, with its bitterness and faithlessness, would be unknown. So it was in the rural districts of this country during my boyhood. The idea of servants, excepting, perhaps, the case of apprentices alone, did not obtain. *Europe* first sent us *servants*; and these, by neglecting the virtues of their class at home, and not rising above the condition of servants here, have at length, in the majority of cases, become mere pests, earning nothing, claiming extravagant wages, and leaving their employers on the slightest pretext, or none at all; being careful of only one thing—to wit—that their employers should not, by any accident, reap the slightest benefit from their services. But here comes one of the meanest of his kind.

Enter PINHEAD, the farmer.

PIN. There's no water for the stock at the barn, and I don't think I was employed to carry it to 'em exactly.

FISH. I am aware that we are short of water—no less at the house than at the barn—and I have commenced boring, as you know, and from present indications we shall find a plenty of water. The discharge will be mid-way between the house and the barn, and, I hope, will make us all comfortable.

PIN. Wa'll, that ain't all. I did not engage to work so hard. I have been misused. I was to oversee and manage—that was pretty much all.

FISH. It is no doubt pleasanter to look on and see others do the work. The laziest man that I ever knew was forever haunting a saw-mill—sitting on a log and *overseeing* the action of the saw ; thus witnessing the expenditure of a satisfactory amount of energy without wasting any of his own.

PIN. Wa'll, that is nothin' to the p'int. I stipulated for holidays and sich ; but I was kept busy durin' general trainin', was kept back from the squirrel hunt, had only two days at the county fair, was actually refused the privilege of going a week a huckle-berrying in harvest time, and although a member of the base ball club, I have not been allowed more than twenty-one or two days, for this favorite recreation, during the last four months !

FISH. I rather think you *have* been abused.

PIN. Wa'll—then I ought tu have satisfaction. But that ain't all. You was to allow me the product of seven hens, and you allowed Tim Trumpet seven more. Wa'll, the hens was divided—Tim had hisen, and I mine. Now they're all a layin', and the eggs of Tim's hens are at least one-fifth bigger'n' mine, and there's more on 'em besides.

FISH. That *is* a case for redress, certainly ! What sum do you think would make you whole ?

PIN. How ? Wa'll, I should say about eighteen pence would make me whole for as fur as the hens has lain.

FISH. (*Handing him a shin-plaster.*) There, take your damages. Anything else ?

PIN. Wa'll, it hurts my feelin's that there is no better observance of the holy Sabbath on this place.

FISH. It is hardly worth while for me to observe the day personally, since I can do it vicariously, by one under my pay, who contrives to keep holy, so far as abstaining from labor goes, not only Sunday, but three or four days in every week besides. I would not like to offend the gods by offering them too much of a good thing !

PIN. How ? Wa'll (*going*)—I'll pray for you, Mr. Fish (*looking at him spitefully*).

FISH. As you have *preyed on* me quite industriously for a long time, it may afford an agreeable relief from your arduous labors to pray *for* me ; and

if the gods choose to hear you, I am sure I can't help it.

PIN. Somebody ought to pray for a man that never goes to meetin', I'm sure.

FISH. You are aware that I run a chapel on my own account, and Mrs. Fish has so contrived it that it is at present propelled by a double donkey power.

PIN. I won't hear any man talk so, no how !

[*Exit in a huff.*

MRS. FISH. Wa'll, Pinhead is right, though, about one thing : you never du cum tu chapil, and I du not think that's right, nor safe nuther.

FISH. Oh ! I rather think I shall come out all right ; for I have read somewhere that the believing wife sanctifies the unbelieving husband ; and if that is so, the very Devil must be in it if you and Haba-kuk cannot carry me through !

MRS. FISH. You must have read that in *Tom. Paine*, or some of your other infidel books, for it ain't the fair thing at all to put it all onto the poor, weak woman's back that way.

Enter MUNCHAUSEN LAGERBIER.

LAGER. Mr. Fiss, I fustain dat you disbleasure of de grapes last zummer, and fine vault, and don't likes me von beet.

FISH. I did complain about the lateness of the tomatoes, I remember. Why did not they ripen earlier ?

LAGER. De vether vas too try.

FISH. As to the grapes—they were all lost by rot and mildew.

LAGER. It vas so tam yet dat dem all vent bat.

FISH. The vines were all covered with insects.

LAGER. It was so tam hot and try, dat dem pugs and peetles cot te start ov me.

FISH. The plums all fell from the tree, and were good for nothing.

LAGER. Dem colt and yet played te Tuyvel mit te blums.

FISH. My garden was overrun with weeds.

LAGER. Too mosh manure—very too mosh.

FISH. The vegetables were very slender indeed.

LAGER. Cartin too tam poor ; dem cartin vegibles vant mosh manure—very mosh inteed.

FISH. An intelligent vineyardist, on looking at my vines last season, told me that they were neglected, and needed cutting back vastly more than had been done.

LAGER. How more you cut 'em back, how more dem sprouts ? But dat's notin. I vas to hav vun half te barrel of *Lager* a week, and have only had a tam quarter—and I am try, try, try, all de time.

FISH. You may go. You will receive your back wages at my office. I am satisfied that it requires more to make a respectable gardener and vineyardist than the speaking of bad English and

the drinking of worse beer. Besides, it is refreshing occasionally to hear a word of truth.

[*Exit Lager.*

Enter Cook, Chambermaid, &c., &c., all in high dress, wearing very long trains.

ALL. (*To Mrs. Fish.*) We won't stand it. You can do your own work—no more of a lady than we are—was once a cook yourself—now deny a fellow cook fair wages—we have no privileges, &c.

MRS. FISH. For Heaving's sake, forbear ! Wretches ! Ef you've got your wages, be skerse—scatter—se-lope !

ALL. A mighty lady of the Model House, to be sure ! Model fiddlesticks ! You allus treated us as though you hated us ; but you don't hate the one we see a comin'—oh, no ! not at all ! Quite the reverse !

[*Exeunt with spiteful ceremony, dragging long trains.*

Enter HABAKUK.

HAB. My brother and sister ! The day of doom has come, if we are not mistaken in our calculations ; but there may be an error of a day, or two, or three ; still it is very near, and the occasion is pressing. (*To Fish.*) Do you know that the end draweth nigh ?

FISH. No ; but if such should be the case, I can't say that I regret it. The introduction of man on this planet has not, I think, been a success—if com-

mon honesty or decent religion were the object in view ; and the sooner the experiment ends, the better.

HAB. Sinner ! what can save you ?

FISH. I hardly know. I have neither learning nor loud mouthed piety, and for the lack of these shall, perhaps, be obliged to fall back on sense and integrity.

HAB. You are as obstinate as Jonah, and deserve a similar fate. [Groans.]

FISH. If not swallowed by a whale, perhaps I deserve to be devoured by a *shark*. *That* judgment I take to be within your power to execute, and it would make a *Fish* story more probable than the old one. [Exit Fish.]

HAB. (*To Mrs. Fish.*) What a shocking man he is to be the partner of such an angel ! Dearest madam, do you ever think kindly of your poor Habakuk, and do you mean, at the day of doom, to link your fate to his ?

MRS. FISH. I often think it would have been more homogenous ef I had had you instid of Job. To be sure, yourn and hisen are both good Scripter names ; but yours is the most omposin'. I have often called you tu mind in the silent watch-house of the night, and thought of you as a flower of grease and booty — as my own night bloomin' serious !

HAB. (*Groans, and puts his arm around her.*) At the day of doom, we are to be saved or lost in pairs. We shall go, two by two, to heaven or hell. Choose, then, whether you will go to glory with Habakuk, or to hell with Job !

NUTM. (*Concealed—gives a ghostly echo.*) To hell with Job !

[*Nutmeg and Tim appear for an instant, in the rear of the stage, making characteristic signs.* Ex.

SCENE III.—SCENE, *Entrance to Chapel of the Model House*—TIME, *Early evening of the 23d of April.*

Enter NUTM. and TIM.

NUTM. Well, Tim, I rather think Habakuk has kinder hauled off, as there don't seem to be any alarmin' symptums of the airth's dissolootion just yit. But it seems a pity that his flock should be disapp'nted in so important a affair, an' I guess you and I'll hev tu put it through.

TIM. I have brought the gong, the dinner horn, and some powder, kerosene, &c., as you told me, and they are all stowed away for use.

NUTM. I shall then proceed, when the audience assembles, to fill Habakuk's pulpit ; the fact is, Tim, we've kind a exchanged—as parsons will, you know ; and du you git behind the curtain, and du as we've talked, and jest as I'll tell ye. The fust thing in order will be thunder ; and then, “ Little

boy blue, blow your horn," when I say. Give the gong particular fits at the grand crisis. Now for it!

[*Exit Tim.*

(*Nutmeg arrays himself in an ascension robe, in exact imitation of Habakuk, when the door of the Chapel opens, revealing an audience—some in white ascension robes—Mrs. Fish in her grand seat, also robed—Nutmeg ascends the pulpit with solemnity.*)

NUTM. (*Imitating Hab.*) The hour of doom has come ! This old world totters to its foundation on the back of the great snappin' turtle, and acts like a coal of fire put onto his back. He kind o' sticks out legs, feet and tail suddenly, and se-lopes. This sets us all tu goin' wild—and there's nothin' to be did but to put out the fire or wring the turtle's neck. If nothing is did, you'll hear thunder presently, see lightning, and smell hell as a nosegay. There's no escape, except for those that hev on the orthodox fixin's. Although it is an *Aperil* day, yet it's later than the fust, and all foolin's past. (*Aside.*) Thunder, Tim ! (*A low murmur of the gong—the audience listens and shudders.*)

You hear the openin' address ; air you ready ? (*Aside.*) Louder, Tim ; give a big whack ! (*Loud thunder and flashes of lightning.*)

Let them that is robed rise. (*Mrs. Fish and others robed obey.*)

(*Aside.*) Sound your trumpet, and give 'em fits generally! (*A loud sound of the horn—Great sensation in the audience.*)

(*Aside.*) Now give us a h'ist, Tim—and do your darndest! (*Nutmeg rises a few feet in the air, and thus suspended halts.*)

Follow me!

(*The audience huddle together—cry—sob—shout—Mrs. Fish faints—is carried out—All hasten away, looking backward at the ascension, which is prolonged—Finally all disappear in a fright, and Chapel closes.*)

Enter NUTM. and TIM in the ante-room to Chapel—as at first.

NUTM. (*To Tim.*) You are a glorious saint, you are.

TIM. And you're a fust rate sinner.

NUTM. I'll not be ungrateful. Ef I *should* ever go to heaven, I'll carry a rope, and as some slight return for your inestimable sarvices this night, I'll pull you up arter me. [*Exeunt together laughing.*]

SCENE IV.—*A room in the Model House.*

Enter MRS. FISH and GRACE.

MRS. FISH. I don't think I ever got such a shock in all my born days. I feel drudfully, and as thof I never shouldn't be myself ag'in.

GRACE. Have patience, dear mother, and all will be right with you soon. Bodily ills are not the worst ones which afflict us poor mortals.

[*Sighs deeply.*

MRS. FISH. Was that sigh for your poor sufferin' mother, or more likely for Capting Loyal, who may be killed and all out of the way, nice and comfortable, by this time, while I—oh ! how trembleous air my sobs and sighs ; and it seems as thof I could respire now and go off without a grunt or a groan.

GRACE. My poor mother ! But here comes the doctor.

Enter Doctor Similibus.

SIMIL. Good morning, ladies ! You are both looking so well, I can hardly tell which is my patient. (*To Grace.*) I wish it was you, so that I could get my revenge for the suffering you have caused me (*laying his hand on his heart*).

MRS. FISH. I shouldn't think there was much dif-
fikilty in seeing that *I* am the sufferer now. My head is a perfect ma's nest ; my narves are all aghost ; I have a constant quiveration in my limbs ; I see all sorts o' sights, and my ears go tiza-rizen—tiza-rizen—unconsciously !

SIMIL. These symptoms are to be met by a medicine, which, if administered to you in a perfectly sound state of mind and body, would cause precisely the same symptoms. The great principle of the illustrious Hahnemann is, *that like cures like*—or to express it more learnedly, *similia similibus curantur*.

MRS. FISH. I don't care what Mr. Honeyman says, nor *Sim Omnibus the ranter*, nuther. If I've got tu take over ag'in what caused all the commotion in my system—an actual ascension at the world's eend—why, I might as well die at onct, and dun with it.

SIMIL. My time is precious. I am pressed hard in the service of suffering hnmanity. Your symptoms call for this (*exhibiting a very small phial with small pills*): take one of these once or twice a month, and (*exhibiting a phial containing a red fluid*) put one drop of this in a pailful of water, and take a tea spoonful once in forty-eight hours; and you will soon be a well woman, depend on it. (*To Grace.*) When shall I ever be well of thee?

(*Grace rises with dignity, takes her mother by the arm and leads her off, while Simil., embarrassed, is about to go.*)

Enter NUTMEG.

NUTM. (*To Simil.*) Wa'll, doctor, how goes it? Will Mrs. Fish git on?

SIMIL. There is really nothing seriously the matter with her; but I have given her a remedy that will fetch her out shortly.

NUTM. Let's see—I think you're of the like cures like persuasion? Wa'll, that's the true science, no doubt. Did you ever hear how it was diskivered?

SIMIL. I rather think I am familiar with the discoveries of the illustrious Hahnemann, the founder of *Homeopathic* medicine.

NUTM. The illustrious be darned ! It's no sich thing. An old neighbor of ourn in *Varmount*—Dr. Toucey by name—diskivered it, and I'll tell ye how. He had an old critter for a patient that tormented him eternally with narvous complaints, and was allus complainin' of a singin' in her head—a singin' in her head—till byme by the doctor got mad ; and as she hollered out tu him one day, when he was a ridin' by her house, “ Doctor, doctor, that singin' keeps a goin' on in my head yet !” the doctor replied : “ Wa'll, you just make a gammut poultice—apply it to t'other extremity—and see ef you can't draw the music down !”

SIMIL. (*In a rage.*) How dare you ! [Exit.

NUTM. Wa'll, now, the doctor's mad. But it's a fact—and it cured the old critter. [Exit singing.

“ They chaw tobacco thin
Over there, over there,
And the juice runs down their chin
Over there,” &c.

SCENE V.—*The garden of the Model House—Present,*
GRACE FISH and SARAH BROWN.

SARAH. My dear Grace, this suspense is dreadful. Not one word have I heard from William since he left us. I do not doubt his constancy, but I fear for his fate.

GRACE. It is better that you should remain in ignorance than know the dreadful truth. We have heard from him—and, alas ! have heard too much !

(*They embrace, weeping—A pause.*) Shall I break the truth to you, or will you be content to remain in ignorance of his fate ?

SARAH. He is dead—killed on the field of battle !

[*Falls on Grace's shoulder and weeps.*

GRACE. No, my dear Sarah, he lives—as we suppose ; at least our last accounts left him alive.

SARAH. (*Reviving.*) Then tell me all ; so that he be alive, there yet is ground of hope ; pray tell me all.

GRACE. He is a prisoner of war, in the hands of the enemy.

SARAH. Oh, God ! that is worse than death ! Say, where is he confined ?

GRACE. *At Andersonville !*

(*A solemn pause, during which they look at each other mournfully, then with horror depicted on their countenances, when Sarah falls into the arms of Grace, who bears her to a seat—She at length revives.*)

SARAH. I feel better now—thanks, dearest Grace ; and pray pardon me for my seeming selfishness. You also have a precious interest at stake in this dreadful war, and I have not inquired a word respecting Capt. Loyal. I hope no evil has befallen him ?

GRACE. Not a word has been heard from my dear Frank since he left us on New Year's day. All we know is, that the army which he expected to join has been in repeated bloody battles since he must

have arrived at his destination, including that of *Lookout Mountain*; and from the nature of Capt. Loyal, we have reason to believe that he was borne into the thickest of the fight.

SARAH. That he is as brave as he is gentle and good, none doubt that know him; but alas! it is such that in the order of things seem destined first to fall. But Heaven grant him safety and honor, and a speedy return, to make you, and all of us, happy!

GRACE. Thanks, and amen! I will not despair. I bade him go—though with a sad and heavy heart—and I should be unworthy of his love, and an unworthy daughter of our glorious country, if I wished him to return until he had done everything in his power to stay the tide of treason and rebellion, and to restore peace and safety to our bleeding land. When that shall be accomplished, then welcome, dear Frank, to my hand and heart! or, if he be brought home sooner, maimed and bleeding, from the field of battle, then welcome still! and I will be his kind and gentle nurse before I become his happy bride!

[*Exeunt.*

Enter HABAKUK—solus.

(*Nutm. and Tim seen in the background.*)

HAB. I do not quite see my way out of this business. Of course the destruction did not happen, as predicted; but what of that? There is no limit to

ignorant credulity, and I think I can draw further on the bank of solid ignorance and blind faith, which is always kept in funds in the bosom of poor frail humanity. There was Matthias, who set up for Jehovah in the great city which lies yonder ; and he took captive several quite respectable wholesale merchants, one of whom lent him his wife, in perfect simplicity and good faith—willing to play the part of Joseph in the advent of another Saviour, to be born of this strange and preposterous union of his wife with the impostor. That wife testified, in all simplicity and innocence, in a court held by Judge Ruggles, in this very county, on the trial of Matthias for murder, that she solemnly believed he was the Almighty, and she expected to be the mother of a Son of God, until, at length, when the child was born, it turned out to be a *little girl!* (*Laughs and chuckles.*) This, surely, is encouraging, especially as the MODEL HOUSE stands very near the spot where that child was begotten.

(*Nutm. and Tim listen, and make signs of appreciation, in the background.*)

Then there was Joe Smith. He was a tavern-haunting horse jockey, and had for a boon companion a journeyman printer of some talent, but of dissolute habits, who had amused his leisure hours by writing a large amount of trash in imitation of the style of the Old Testament. The poor devil of a printer died, and Joe appropriated his manuscripts,

and finally invented the story of the Revelation by means of golden plates, buried in the earth, containing the substance of the Mormon Bible. He printed this stuff, and set up for a prophet, priest, and almost king, and had his claim allowed by the fools who flocked to his standard, and his disciples flourish at *Salt Lake* even unto this day. This, also, is encouraging. However religionists and philosophers may contend respecting man's immortality, the fool always exists, and hence is immortal. Ignorance on the part of the victim, impudence on the part of the operator—so that both be complete—are sure passports to success.

(*A noise from Nutm. and Tim.*)

I had better go and meditate further what explanation to give Mrs. Fish of the failure, which confounds her. I think she can be made to believe that the affair of the conflagration is not over yet; so here goes. [*Exit—Leaves with a suspicion that he has been observed, and retires to a recess and watches.*

Enter NUTM. and TIM.

NUTM. Tim, do you know your catechism?

TIM. I guess I can repeat some of it.

NUTM. Wa'll, then, what is the chief eend of man? Give it up? Then I'll answer it for you, you ignorant cuss! 'Tis to keep what he's got and git what he can. And it rhymes besides. Wa'll, try another, let down to your humble capacity; who was the honestest man?

TIM. (*Doubtingly.*) Abraham Lincoln?

NUTM. No, you fool; Joseph. Why? Because he wouldn't "*se-lope*" with Potiphar's wife. But why and wherefore would not the estimable Joseph "*se-lope?*" 'Cause, they du say, she was nun tu hansum—sartinly not half as good lookin' as Mrs. Fish, and not a quarter as rich!

Enter HABAKUK.

HAB. My friends, you seem to be enjoying yourselves; but do not indulge in too much unseemly mirth, for the end still draweth nigh! Let me ask you, why did our blessed Saviour suffer?

TIM. I give it up.

NUTM. You old cuss, git eaout! and don't bother us with any of your darned conundrums!

[*Exeunt—Curtain falls.*

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ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A room in the Model House—Early evening—Present, NUTM. and TIM.*

NUTM. Tim, we are to have a Spirit Circle in these here diggin's to-night, and I am tu be *mejeum*.

TIM. What's that?

NUTM. Oh! you ignorant critter! Why, it's a man or woman—for either sect'll du, but I rayther think the feminine goes it the strongest—that kind

a commoönates with t'other world, and commoons with the diseased, circularly.

TIM. Wa'll, what of it ?

NUTM. Wa'll, I can't du the bisness gogeously—as Mrs. Fish says—without a leetle help from you. I want you tu git under the table, right down thar (*pointing beneath the floor*), and rap or thump up agin the floor like fury—one, tew, three, or a dozen raps at a time, just as the sperit moves you. When I inquire “Is there a sperit present?” you must rap, rap, and du it right, tu, or I'll kill you. But specially, when you hear me call out, saying : “Now for the *last* time, is there a sperit present?” you must rap like all natur at fust, then stop and yell out “Yes !” in a female feminine voice—a sort of scream, as when a woman in the flesh steps on a serpent—and then listen. I shall next inquire, in the perlitest manner possible, “Onto whom did you belong when into the flesh ?” Then you will answer, “Unto Jerusha, late lamented wife of the *Rev. Habakuk Hyacinth*, of blessed memory.” I shall then inquire, “How came you, my respected madam, in the world of sperits ?” and Tim Trumpet will reply — al-y Shakespeare—“Lis—list—oh, listen ! By *pizen*, administered by my beloved husband, the *Rev. Habakuk Hyacinth*—and further this deponent saith not !” That'll du, Tim, and you can absquatulate. Now the company's cumin’ (*giving Tim a*

push), so you go under, and hold your yaup till I want you.

[*Exit Tim.*

(*The parlor doors are thrown open, and seen to enter Mr. and Mrs. Fish and Grace, Dr. Similibus and John Code, Mr. and Mrs. Brown, Freelove and Mrs. Wisp, Habakuk, Mrs. Grundy, &c.—As the company take seats, they arrange themselves round a table, in a circle—Nutm. facing the audience—Hab. holding hand of Mrs. Fish; Simil., Grace; Freelove, Mrs. Wisp; Code, Mrs. Brown; Fish, Mrs. Grundy.)*

MRS. GRUNDY. We make a glorious circle, I declare; and I venture to hope that when we call “spirits from the vasty deep” that they will come. I hope no one here doubts that we now hold an easy intercourse with the spirit world?

MR. FISH. I confess to some doubts, and yet the longer I live I am less inclined to doubt, as well as to believe, any statement relative to the nature of man. My judgment is rather suspended, and I am prepared to listen and consider.

MRS. GRUNDY. It is not to be wondered at that a gentleman so skeptical as yourself should have misgivings on the great subject before us; but of course, as it is a mere question of fact, a man of your known candor will listen fairly to evidence.

MR. FISH. Of course, madam. Besides, to say the truth, I have had of late some sensations of a very extraordinary character, tending, it may be, to help your side of the case. As I sing an old tune which was familiar to my boyhood, or call up some

scene in which my father, mother, or young sister were actors, or even touch an old book in my library which these dear and now departed friends once read, or in which I find their handwriting, I feel a sudden thrill, so powerful as to shock and nearly deprive me of sense and motion for an instant. And this is followed by a sense of loneliness, and the utter worthlessness of my continued existence, so acute and deep, as to be beyond my powers of description. It seems, at such times, as if the spirits of the departed impressed me, and called me away to abide with them ; for it seems impossible that the impression should proceed from any thing within me. Now what is this ? You know I am far from being superstitious ; on the contrary, I am, as you say, skeptical ; and yet there seems to exist a tie, not yet severed, between my inmost soul and these dear friends. Is it their spirits, or only their memory, which thus haunts me—plunges me into melancholy and calls me hence ?

MRS. GRUNDY. Depend on it, my dear sir, you have been visited by good angels which bore tender relations to you during their mortal existence here. But although the facts which you state are very interesting, they are not quite equal to the extraordinary but well authenticated ones on which spiritualism rests. Take one as an example : Two medical students in New Haven, Conn., being about to cast lots for a subject for dissection, to one of them the

spirit which once animated that body appeared, expressed a desire that the body should fall into his hands, and instructed his favorite how, in the casting of lots, he could win. He did win, and converted the body to the uses of science. The bones were carefully prepared for a skeleton, and kept in the office at New Haven, where the student had read medicine. On obtaining his diploma, he established himself in the city of New York; and how the bones followed him I have endeavored to portray in the following lines, which I wrote soon after hearing the statement of this wonderful case from Judge Nedbone, whose veracity in spirit circles has never been doubted. I hope I may be permitted to read the lines?

ALL. Certainly! (*With enthusiasm.*)

MRS. GRUNDY. (*Reads.*)

LINES ON A CONNECTICUT SKELETON.

BY MRS. GRUNDY.

I.

DOCTOR CUTE had opened an office in town—
Had a sign—but no horse and gig—
So he walked all over, up and down,
Looking grave, and wise, and big;
But he'd left in New Haven, out in the cold,
A skeleton tied up tight—
Bone after bone—
And oh! 'twas a horrible sight!

II.

The spirit that once did the skeleton sway
Undertook to do it again ;
So it waited until *the first of May*,
And then for a *move* put in ;
But 'twas too much of a load to carry at once,
And so, to make it light,
Each bone came alone,
And singly dropt on the dirty flag stone !

III.

Thus, day after day, as the Doctor went round,
Giving calomel, salts, and pukes,
The bones dropt before him on the ground,
Till it told upon his looks.
While yet not completed, the Doctor took sick,
The bones would still drop on his floor—
Bone after bone—
They'd drop on the bare and dirty floor.

IV.

At length the skeleton got complete,
And set itself up in his room !
Let him turn where he would, his eyes they would meet
This horrible ghostly phantom !
He at last lost his wits, and to circles went,
Where spirits more gently rap,
And with solemn tone made Judge Nedbone,
With the story, stand agape !

FISH. Very remarkable, certainly !

NUTM. Wa'll, it may be more gogeous, but not any more remarkable and sartinly no truer, than what, as your respected mejeum, I am about to relate. A terribul old drunken critter, Sol Jones by name, that had been quite reformed by the teetotal people in *Varmount*, was actually turned back tu drink and

ruined by one of them sperits. You see he had, while he was one of the weeked, a companion jest like himself, by the name of Pete Waters, who went off arter a while with *delicious trimmins*, as the boys calls it. Wa'll, byme by, when old Sol was alone one night, purty sad, and may be a trifle dry, he hearn a terribul knockin' under his bed, and says he, a leetle skeared, "Who's thar?" "Pete Waters," says somebody. "Wa'll, what du you want?" says old Sol. "I'm a sufferin' turribly in the world of sperits for want of suthin' tu drink; can't you give me sum?" says Pete. "I would ef I could," says old Sol, for he was a generous critter allus; "but how can I du it?" "Wa'll," says Pete, "you just imbibe the fluids, and I'll take 'em through you!" Sol got right up and did it; and arter that Pete Waters called for liquor so often, that it completely upsot old Sol, and he died also of the same *delicious trimmins*, soon arter, thus Danonin and Pythias in for his friend!"

MRS. GRUNDY. (*Looking a little suspicious of Nutm.*). It is time that we proceeded with our demonstrations. But (*to Nutm.*) I have heard of a performance of yours, which may interest the company; I allude to your celebrated feat with the iron bar, where you completely suspend the action of the law of gravity, by the force of your will. Suppose you favor us.

NUTM. Wa'll, af I've got tu, I'll trouble the congregation fust to jine hands; but don't any on you

go tu squeezin', cause that kind o'thing disturbs the magnetic currents and plays the deuce sometimes (*looking at Hab. and Mrs. Fish*).

(*He goes some distance from the circle, to the side of the stage, takes from behind the scenes a small iron bar, or pair of tongs.*)

You see this bar of iron? (*Sets it up and lets it fall several times.*) You see it obeys the law of gravity now? Observe, then, how soon, with a touch of nullification and glorious *Nutmeg* sovereignty, I'll make that ar bar disobey the law, and become a darned rebel.

(*He gives magnetic passes up and down the bar, around and about his legs, with many mysterious motions; also crosses his forehead, gyrating with fingers at the end of his nose, all the while muttering like this:*

Hokey, pokey, larry-cum-bump ;
Num-pum, rum-pum, thum-pum ;
Tokay, rokay, jerry-me-jump ;
Mum-pum, sun-pum, bun-pum !

(*While so muttering, he attaches an invisible silk cord to his legs and the bar, by which he controls it; then allows it to lean at as great an angle from a perpendicular as possible, all the while leaning over it, with an intense and straining air, as if concentrating all his powers on the bar—Freelove advances a step or two to look into the manner of it.*)

NUTM. (*Motions him to stop.*) By no means. Keep at an awful distance, with your eyes starin' and your mouths wide open; and don't come near me, or you'll be sure to dissentralize my will, and

the entire magnetic force which holds this bar suspended will all kind o' squash out. (*Resumes his muttering.*)

Hokey, pokey, larry kum bump,
Runkies, tunkies, monkies,
Swaller—ever—so—big—a—lump—
Flunkies, monkies, donkies !

(Having unfastened the silk cord during the uttering of this, he addresses the iron bar.)

Now you may fall from grace and be darned !

[*The bar falls.*

MRS. GRUNDY. One of the most extraordinary facts which science has yet elicited in support of our sublime theories ! Now, my dear Mr. Nutmeg, you have entirely won my confidence, and I shall expect hereafter the greatest things of you.

NUTM. (*Taking his seat at the table.*) Here's hopin' that you may not be disapp'nted. (*Makes passes over his face, forehead and breast, and gyrates with his fingers at end of nose.*) Now for it ! make ready, take aim, fire ! (*With great solemnity.*) Is there a sperit present ? (*Aside.*) Rap, Tim, you darned critter ! (*Several raps are heard under the table—a pause.*) Who air you, and what du you want—jest say ? (*Rap, rap, rap, and then a pause.*) I am impressed by the sperit to say that the critter we have called from the nasty deep is the sperit which once had the honor to animate the *Connecticut skiletion*, referred tu by the virtooous and trooly admirable Mrs. Grundy in her immortal lines, and

the sperit says, confidentially, and in the perlitest manner possible, that that story is all a darned lie ! (*Great sensation, and Mrs. Grundy betrays some signs of anger.*) Now for the last time, I solemnly inquire, Is there any other sperit present ?—feminines being now in order. (*A loud, continuous and terrible rapping ensues, and a female voice shrieks.*)

VOICE. Yes, yes, oh, yes !

NUTM. I beg to inquire, with all possible consideration for your delicate feelin's, onto whom did you belong when into the flesh ?

VOICE. (*Still shrieking.*) Unto Jerusha, late lamented wife of the Rev. Habakuk Hyacinth, of blessed memory.

(*Hyacinth rises in terror.*)

NUTM. How came you, my soft voiced angel, into the sperit world ?

VOICE. Lis—list—oh, listen ! It was by *pizen*, administered in a cup of black tea, which was my weakness, by my tender and beloved husband, the Rev. Habakuk Hyacinth—and further this deponent saith not ! (*The circle breaks up in wild confusion.*)

[*Exeunt all but Fish and Code.*

CODE. (*Laughing.*) We have certainly had an amusing time this evening.

FISH. Yes ; and now let us say a word of business. I got your parcel containing the bonds, which have absorbed my entire estate, and have deposited them in my safe. I have set apart, and placed in a sepa-

rate box, bonds to the amount of a hundred thousand dollars, by way of settlement on my wife, and marked it with her name. If that will do, then my affairs are all snug.

CODE. That will do for the present. I will prepare a formal settlement at my leisure, which can be executed at your convenience.

FISH. I have had some good fortune of late. In boring for water I have struck oil, and the issue is so great that hitherto we have had no means of securing it.

CODE. That is fortunate ; but you are well enough off without this, and it seems almost a pity that you should be burdened with such a business at your time of life, and in such a paradise as this.

FISH. Yes ; but it was not of my seeking ; it was, as it were, thrust upon me, and with it has come the envy of my neighbors, some of whom are singing, as they pass by, so as really to annoy my poor Grace, the silly song of "*Pa has struck ile!*"

CODE. Let them sing on and be dashed ! Grace is as much superior to their envy as they are beneath her just contempt. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*An office in the Model House, in which appears the door of a large safe built in the wall.—Present, NUTM. and TIM.*

TIM. The oil has flowed all over the premises ; it reaches to the barn-yard, and has got almost down to the house. It won't stop, and we have no barrels or anything to put it in.

NUTM. (*Shaking his head gravely.*) That ain't quite the thing. 'Twouldn't take a hundred year, at that rate, to set the barn and house afire, and give a fine start to Habakuk's grand conflagration. Wa'll, they du say, af a man axes for bread, you shouldn't oughter gin him a stun; but here my respected employer axed for water, and ile was given unto him, instead thereof, nevertheless (*imitating the nasal tone of Habakuk.*) Now any smokin' cuss round with a cigar, and there's several on em round, or any malicious critter, could burn us all up in tew shakes. What's to be did? Hang me if I know. But see, Tim (*pointing outward*), there cum Habakuk and Mrs. Fish, let's you and me hide; saying, he that hath years tu hear, let him hear (*imitating Hab.*). [*Exeunt, concealing themselves.*]

Enter HAB. and MRS. FISH, arm in arm.

MRS. FISH. My dear Habakuk, wasn't you kind a mistaken about the dredful day of doom?

HAB. It seems that we were not precisely accurate, in announcing it to come off on the twenty-third day of April, according to the vulgar reckoning. But that arose from our assuming that the day of doom was fixed by the *New Style*; whereas, we might have known, as the affair was set down long before that style was adopted, that the thing would come off according to the *Old Style*.

MRS. FISH. Wa'll, I don't rightly know about them styles. To be sure I have seen in our almy-

nick, N. S. and settery, but I took that to mean a breviary for non sens, or some sich.

HAB. No, dearest, the O. S. and the N. S. indicate old style and new style, in the mode of reckoning time.

MRS. FISH. Wa'll, for my part, ef I've any thing to say about it, I go in for the new style entirely.

HAB. My dearest madam, that is perfectly natural, and that was my mistake. I incautiously adopted the new style, when I should have taken the old, by which the event would have been delayed about a week, I should think.

As for your preference for the new style ; you will have nothing to regret by the change, since the thing regulated by the old style, you will find altogether the most grand and imposing (*winking wickedly at the audience*).

MRS. FISH. I spoze I've got to go over the hull thing agin. Wa'll ef I must, I must ; I'm designed and will take whatever cumbs beverentially.

HAB. I told you at our last blissful interview, that on the day of doom, we should ascend or descend in pairs, even as the beasts went into *Noah's Ark* ; and I left you to choose, whether you would sink with Job, or rise with me. Pray let me now inquire if you have made your election ?

MRS. FISH. (*Sighing deeply.*) Wa'll, yes, I hev concluded tu stick tu you. But I fear tant quite the thing.

(*Nutm. and Tim appear to hear.*)

HAB. Pray have not the slightest fear. By long humiliation and prayer, I have fully attained unto the perfect man. I feel that I *cannot* err, and that in this business I am inspired to act solely for your eternal welfare. You will meet me at the garden gate, at the hour of eleven this night, and be sure that you bring the box containing those earthly vanities, which your unbelieving husband has bestowed on you, in order to wed you to this wicked world and keep you out of Heaven.

MRS. FISH. I'll du as you say. (*Nutm. and Tim listen eagerly.*) They're in the safe, in a green box, marked with my name, and I can lay my hands on 'em in a giffy. But, my dear Habakuk, sha'n't I have a chance to see *Paris* on the way? I've heard say, that good women, when they died, went there; and so I should like to kind a spend a honeymoon there.

HAB. Oh, certainly! But we have no time to lose. Be sure you bring that box containing the vanities.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

Enter Nutm. and Tim.

NUTM. I rayther think the key I used an hour ago tu git some papers out of the safe for Mr. Fish, and haven't returned yit, by hokey! will open the old sepulchre now, as well as it did then. At any rate I'll try.

(*Feels for the key in his pocket—goes to the safe and applies it—safe opens—Nutm. enters—takes the*

green box marked Mrs. Fish—opens it—takes out all the bonds—fills it up with old news-papers—deposits the bonds carefully in the safe—shuts and locks the door—claps Tim on the shoulder, and dancing with delight, hums.)

NUTM.—

“Ef I had a Donkey
And the critter wouldn’t go—
Du you think I’d wallop him ?
No.”

you cussed critter, Tim—

(*Taking Tim by the ear and leading him off. Exeunt.*)

SCENE III.—*TIME, Night, a few minutes before 11 o’clock, outside the garden, near the gate—MRS. FISH muffled up and disguised, bearing the green tin box. NUTM. disguised as HAB. They approach each other—NUTM., imitating HAB.’s voice and manner, joins her.*

NUTM. I was in such haste to join my dearest love, that I came a few minutes before the time agreed on.

MRS. FISH. And I was so flustered, I hurried off tu, for fear of bein’ ’terrputed.

NUTM. Take my arm, ever dear being, snatched as a brand from the burning, and allow me to relieve you from that burthen. (*Taking the box—they cross the stage, arm in arm, Nutm. gyrating with fingers at nose—disappear for a space behind the scene—reappear from the opposite side, in a stronger light and nearer to the front—Nutm. putting his arm around her waist).* Oh ! my graceful, gliding gold fish ! my own electric eel ! (*Drops his disguise—but still unnoticed by Mrs. Fish.*)

MRS. FISH. My sweet flower of grease and booty !
My night bloomin' serious ! (*Looks at Nutm. and discovers the fraud.*) Oh ! you unjesely wretch.

[*Exit in a rage.*

Enter HABAKUK, disguised.

(*Nutm. resumes his disguise—they confront each other—in precise resemblance, each to the other—Nutm. holding the green box—a long mutual survey and pause.*)

HAB. What means this ? That box ?

NUTM. (*Imitating Hab.*) I am Habakuk the saint, going to glory ! That green tin box is my traveling convenience, containing, among other things, all the news of the day, wherewith to regale my drooping spirits. What wouldst thou with me ? The end draweth nigh ! (*Resumes his own voice and manner, and throws off his disguise.*) You old cuss, the eend *has* cum, and I rayther think it's the *butt eend* tu !

HAB. Oh, thou sinner ! thou devil ! vomit of hell !
Avaunt !

NUTM. Oh ! you jest git eaout ! You had better muzzle, scratch gravel, cut stick, skedaddle, and “ selope !” [*Exeunt Nutm. laughing, Hab. in a rage, but soon returns.*]

Enter HABAKUK.

HAB. (*Solus.*) I can flourish here no longer. I must go ere the law overtakes me. There is but

one dodge left, and I'll come that in the old style. I cannot plead bronchitis and have prescribed the tour of *Europe*; but I can talk to the simple sisters of the *Holy Land*, and of a visit thereunto. They never failed me yet. (*Going off, stumbles over something.*)

[*Exit.*]

Enter NUTMEG.

(*He having observed what Hab. stumbled over, picks it up—and lo! an infant carefully placed in a basket, with a label pinned on its clothes.*)

NUTM. (*Reads label.*) "To its father, the Rev. *Habakuk Hyacinth.*" By mighty! what haint the cussed critter done? It's lucky for me that I got out of his style of fixens when I did, or I might have been taken for the putatrive fayther of this pretty little infant! (*Looks at it and caresses it tenderly.*) This must be Tim's little lamb! Ba-a-a! (*Starts to go, carrying off the baby, with awkward attempts at nursing, when Susan Smith appears in the background, as if fearfully leaving the place—Nutm. sees her.*) I see it all! It is—it is—the leetle lamb! Poor Tim! Ba-a-a-a!

[*Exit.*]

NUTM. (*Behind scenes, hums.*)

"Hush, my babe, lie still and slumber."

SCENE IV.—*Time midnight—the Model House in full view—its upper windows conspicuous—an alarm of fire—great noise and commotion and shrieks within—TIM rushes on the stage.*

TIM. Fire! fire! fire! fire! The infurnal oil is all in flames; they have communicated with the

house ! The wooden part is all in a blaze ! Fire ! fire ! fire !

(*The family and servants rush out, some in night-clothes, in great terror; Mrs. Fish carrying the baby, "the lamb"—flames stream out at the windows.*)

VOICE. Are all out ? Is any one left ?

GRACE. Where is Miss Wisp ? She was our guest to-night. She does not appear, and must be still in her chamber ; oh, God !

Enter NUTMEG.

NUTM. My poor Lavinia ! Her chamber ! The number ! Pray tell me quick !

GRACE. Number ten, on the second floor. Oh, save her ! save her !

NUTM. (*To Tim.*) A ladder ! (*Tim produces one.*) Hold it !

(*Tim places it at an upper window and holds—Nutm. mounts rapidly and disappears amid sound of bells, crash of falling timbers, and flames bursting out in all directions—a dreadful suspense, during which Grace is borne off fainting—Mrs. Fish goes away with the baby; and Nutm. at length appears at the window he entered, at the top of the ladder, bearing Lavinia in his arms—comes carefully down with his precious burden, who seems insensible—brings her forward on the stage—lays her down and kisses her forehead, amid the glad shouts of the company—a pause, during which she revives—sees that Nutm. has rescued her, and speaks faintly.*

LAVINIA. My preserver ! Heaven bless and reward you, dearest Nutmeg !

[Curtain falls, all the characters standing near Nutm. and Lavinia, betraying emotion.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A street—In the distance Job Fish, in humble attire, is seen at work in a garden, planting, within earshot of the passers by—These gather gradually—The Cook, Chambermaid, Seamstress and their companions, lately employed in the Model House, all in high dress, with very long trains, and many airs—They observe Fish in the distance and giggle, he resting occasionally and observing them.*

COOK. It's ruther stale *Fish*, I reckon, now, with the old feller over yunder. Wonder if he don't feel kind o' queer. If he haint got a *Model House* any longer, he means to have some model garding sass, I s'pose.

CHAMBERMAID. He belonged to the *Cod-Fish* aristocracy, and he holds his own ; for he looks mighty dry and shrunken, any how.

SEAMSTRESS. He, he, he ! I guess he'd pass for a smoked *Fish* now sens the burnin'.

ALL. He, he, he ! Ha, ha, ha !

COOK. If this is a case of loaves and Fish-es, there seems to be a greater plenty of Fish than of loaves.

ALL. That's very good ! Say that ag'in !

(*Job Fish rests and listens.*)

*Enter NUTMEG,
who joins the party, wearing an agreeable smile.*

ALL. (*To Nutm.*) Do you know what we are talking about ?

NUTM. No ; but I know you must be saying suthin good, any how.

COOK. *I referred to the old fellow over there (pointing to the garden) as a stale Fish.*

NUTM. Wa'll, I never heerd anything wittier in all my born days.

CHAMBERMAID. And *I alluded to the Cod-Fish aristocracy, rather happily, as I think. He, he, he !*

NUTM. (*stepping on their trains, and begging pardon.*) Wa'll, *you couldn't a said anything better.*

SEAMSTRESS. *I said that the great proprietor of the Model House was a smoked Fish since the fire.*

NUTM. (*Still damaging their trains.*) Ha, ha, ha ! That's the best of the hull, I swow ! Now, gals, you seem to be a good deal in the fish line, and you remind me of a lawyer in *Varmount* that didn't know much, but he sued a feller for a client of hisn for a bill of salt fish sold him. Now, the hull bill was fish, fish, fish, except a few dittos, and then it was fish, fish, fish ag'in. (*Still damaging their trains.*) Wa'll, the lawyer opened elekantly to the jury, and read sum of the items ; but at last, gettin' tired of goin' through so many on 'em all o' one sort, he brought up very sudden, and says he, " Wa'll, gen-

tlemen of the jury, to make a long story short, the defendant was a hell of a feller for fish, any how!"

(Their trains are torn nearly off, and drop on the ground; discovering which, the maids vent their spite on him vulgarly.)

ALL. You are a mean despicable creature, and servant to a beggar-man, you are! [Exeunt maids.

NUTM. (*Solus.*) Them gals will have tu mend their fixin's, I reckon, before they will be able tu perform their street sweeping contract, tu the satisfaction of their employers!

Enter PINHEAD and LAGERBIER.

PIN. (*Looking over at Fish and addressing Nutm.*) It was all house and no farm with the old fellow a few days ago, and now — wa'll, it seems to be all farm and no house.

NUTM. Du you know at what season of the year donkies hev the longest ears?

PIN. How? Wa'll, not exactly; I give it up.

NUTM. Wa'll, it's jest about the same time that fools have the least sense.

LAGER. How more dat ole man blants de carten, how more it wouldn't crow. He like not a coot cadener, may be now he like a tam poor vun; dats all, pe tam!

NUTM. (*To both.*) Gentlemen, your time and services are too valuable to be wasted here. (*They look over at Fish.*) Now don't stare over there with the cur'osity of a cow, and with only half her

understandin'. If your skill and industry shall ever ekal your malice, you will make splendid fortunes. By, bye, beauties!

[*Exeunt Pin and Lager.*

Enter SOFTLY and SIMILIBUS, arm in arm.

SOFTLY. (*To Nutm.*) You no longer attend on an aquarium of gold Fishes, I suppose.

(*Fish overhears.*)

NUTM. I reckon! He that hath *ears* tu hear can l'arn a darned sight, and no mistake, ef he only sticks 'em out long enough! Where is your pious friend and holiday companion, the lamentable Habakuk?

SOFTLY. Gone to the *Holy Land*, where I hope the voice of the scoffer may never reach him more. (*To Similibus.*) Did not I have a narrow escape, though? What if I really *had* married Miss Grace, as no doubt the family expected, and as she seemed greatly to desire (*Fish overhears*); what should I have done with the whole beggarly concern? It makes me shudder to think of it! No, no. Give me the girl whose agacious father, having laid up treasures on earth, has finally abandoned them for greater treasures above, and left them to his only darling daughter. She can say, conscientiously, "Our father, who art in Heaven," and I could join in her devotions with a will! That's the girl for me. Ha, ha, ha! Am I not right, doctor?

(*Fish listens.*)

SIMIL. I rather think you are. The great principle of the illustrious Hahnemann was, that in medicine—

NUTM. (*Interrupting.*) The less you tuk the better, by a darned sight ! as *I* allus understood the sublime science.

SIMIL. As I was saying, the great principle is, that a medicine takes effect on the human system in the reverse ratio of its quantity. One grain is more effective than ten ; a tenth of a grain is infinitely more effective than a grain ; and a millionth part of a grain far better than one-tenth. But while I am a loyal disciple of Hahnemann, and follow his system faithfully, I must say that, personally, and in respect of money or an estate, I reject the infinitesimal theory altogether.

NUTM. I reckon you're right about the everlastin' power of the infinitesimal theory. There was once a doctor in *Varmount* that was the tarnalist old villain I ever seen. Wa'll, he had a large fish pond, cov-erin' an acre or more, ten feet deep o' water, and filled with nice trout—may be four or five hundred on 'em. They did uncommon well, and were all fat and sassy, until one hot evenin' in the month of August, the doctor thought he'd take a swim, arter a hard day's ride, just to kind a cool himself off—for he was a pesky hot-blooded critter—and so he did ; had a nice swim all round the pond ; and I swow ! next mornin' there wasn't a live fish in it. The old cuss had *poisoned* 'em all !

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Time, morning. Scene, a hovel with only two small rooms near the site of the late Model House, on the steep bank of a mill pond—water seen through an open window.*

FISH *on a bench, cobbling a shoe—Mrs. Fish cooking over a few coals—Grace, in humble garb, doing house-work—Susan Smith assisting, and occasionally rocking a cradle containing her infant.*

FISH. (*To Mrs. Fish*). I was once a pretty good shoemaker, and perhaps ought not to despair of becoming one again. (*Pause.*) And you, wife, was once an excellent cook ; and I hope we shall both resume our professions, with a patience and submission becoming our circumstances.

MRS. FISH. I might be a pretty good cook still if a had any thing to exercise my taluns upon ; but salt pork don't require much genus ; and I raly wish we had sum fresh.

FISH. The only fresh thing we are likely to have a plenty of, is misfortune.

(*The slender breakfast is carried into the other room by Grace and Susan.*)

MRS. FISH. Wall, whatever we've got is ready. Here, Susan, move the cradle into the dinin' room, and come, all the rest on you, tu breakfast. (*Mrs. Fish enters the next room, and Susan follows with the cradle.*)

FISH. I will be excused, and breakfast on my sorrows. Pray go in, dearest Grace, and join your mother.

GRACE. No, my beloved father, I will breakfast with you and share your sorrows. You will not deny me that melancholy privilege.

FISH. I would have denied you nothing, my sweet daughter, in the days of my prosperity, and I will deny you nothing now. I give thee all I have—and all I have to bestow is grief and sorrow, poverty and want. We have nothing left. Even the very well, having flowed sufficient oil to destroy our all by fire, has dried up and now yields nothing—not even water, of which I was in quest. Our entire estate was invested in government bonds; these were deposited in the safe, supposed to be fire-proof; but an examination of the ruins has shown that all these bonds were burned to ashes, and half a million of dollars—the accumulation of a life of honest industry and economy—was consumed in a single hour! (*A pause.*) Come nearer to me, darling. I am getting old. I might have leaned on a daughter married worthily, and loving her poor old father well. But my sweet Grace is the affianced bride of a most worthy but poor young officer, who has rushed into the thickest battles of the west, and all we know of his fate is—that we know nothing. (*Grace takes her father's hand, sinks her head on his breast and weeps.*) It would have been most natu-

ral, perhaps, for an aged and impoverished father, to have leaned, in his wretchedness, on the arm of a brave and dutiful son. I once had such a son, and you a noble brother ; but our country called him into her service : the dear boy obeyed—and *Andersonville* now contains the poor emaciated being, without food, shelter or warmth, exposed to all the malice of the elements, and worse, to the hellish tortures of fiends in human form, and dying, it may be, the most horrible of all deaths (*Grace sobs aloud*) ; or that hell of treason may only contain his emaciated corpse—while his delivered spirit may now be hovering over us, and pitying the miserable fate of his loved ones here ! (*Grace kneels—embraces him, while they mingle their tears together.*) Nay, rise, my sweet daughter, and let us be brave ! (*Grace rises and resumes her seat near him.*) Perhaps we can bear even all this better than that envy which visited us during the days of our prosperity, or the sneers which follow our fall. You know my humble origin. I have been, in early life, sick, half clad, friendless, and without a dollar ; and all the while in the presence of wealthy people, who deigned not so much as even to look at me ; and yet I never envied any man or woman. Their superior condition only excited my emulation. I may have vices, but envy is not of the number. A just man is incapable of envy. There are degrees in this vice, and it has been my fate, living in the coun-

try, to encounter it in the superlative. Of all the envious, the petty villager is the most despicable. He adds idleness, ignorance and presumption—like small boils around a carbuncle—to set off this vice. In a large city, envy assumes something of the dignity of emulation, or at least is preserved from a low and contemptible aspect by busy intelligence and the number of the fortunate; but in a small village, or at the street crossings of a little hamlet, seat your idle, mean and envious man on a salt barrel, in front of a country store, give him an audience worthy of him and his theme, and if there be a fortunate man in the neighborhood, he will be so reviewed and depreciated that the simple minded hearers will consider it were better for that man had he never been born. And all because the orator on the salt barrel despairs of ever becoming his equal! (*Grace smiles faintly through her tears.*) I have become hardened to all this, and in general pass it by in silence and contempt. But since our fall, even yesterday, I could not help overhearing, as I worked in our humble garden, a studious mocking and derision of myself and my misfortunes. This, as to me, is next to nothing. In such a case the mocker is to pitied rather than the mocked. Talk of a burning hell! The *mind* of a man or woman capable of rejoicing at the sorrows and misfortunes of a fellow being, is the severest place of punishment in the universe reserved for the wicked by the Justice

of Heaven ! I say I cared little for myself. But, my sweet Grace, having loved you with all the tenderness of a doting father from your earliest moments until now ; having watched with pride and glowing hope your beautiful promise, and having at length sanctioned, with a father's blessing, your contemplated union with one entirely worthy of your love, I own you are my idol—an old doting father's dearest pet (*great emotion, their heads bowed*) ; and yesterday, you will scarcely credit my words—as I could scarcely give credence to my ears—men, professing to be gentlemen, and one a conspicuous Christian—a leader and example—men who have enjoyed the hospitality of our house, our patronage in business, and our friendship—these men (oh ! God, didst thou intend them for such ?)—within the hearing of my ear, derided your fallen state, mocked at you, and treated your name and lost hopes as though you were the meanest of womankind !! This, this was too much for a father's heart to bear ; and if there were no law to hang a poor man—and only a poor one—for mur— !

GRACE. Dearest father, say not so ! Do not, I beseech you, feel so deeply for me ! All that harms me not. See ! am I not as well as I was yesterday ? I suffer none ; and have you not, just now, turned over all such wretches to the hell of their own minds ? Why, then, think of hazarding the fair fame, and even the very life, of the dearest and

noblest father that lives, to avenge an insult to a daughter, when that insult has not reached her ; and to right her wrongs, when she feels them not ?

FISH. (*After a pause.*) I was too hasty, sweet daughter, and will do no evil, for your sake. (*A pause.*) Now for another matter. The only legacy I have received of late has come from our late chaplain, Hyacinth, and of course I accept it ; for what poor man ever refused a legacy ? The child shall be a member of our family, and I will toil for my little household, adopted ones and all. Sarah must continue in our service ; but not being such a Christian as Habakuk and Softly are, I must have a touch of revenge, and so I propose to give the boy a spiteful Christian name, no other than *Thomas Paine Voltaire* ! Think of these names added to that of the devout Hyacinth ! But we will not smother the boy with too great a weight of names in infancy, so we will call the little creature *Tommy* for the present. Now, my darling, let's in to breakfast, for my eloquence has given me an appetite.

[*Exeunt arm in arm.*

Enter NUTM. and TIM.

NUTM. I smell breakfast, but I don't see it, as the boys say. I'll try to git a crumb, any how. (*Looks into a pantry.*) Here, Tim, you glutton, is suthin to stay your voracious appetite (*handing him a biscuit*), and here's another for your superior officer (*taking one himself*). Now let's be off, and not

trouble our friends for any thing more (*offering to go*).

Enter JOHN CODE.

CODE. Well, my honest friends, how are you ?

NUTM. Very much refreshed sens the fire, as the boy said when he got a lickin' ; I thank you, how is it with yourself ?

CODE. Busy as ever with lawyer's tricks, and all sorts of knavery, as you honest people always think of us.

NUTM. Wa'll, sum lawyers are honest ; and then agin, sum ain't. It's just as it is among the clargy ; sum'll go up, and sum'll go tu the place we read on, as containin' more'n its equitable share of combustible materials.

CODE. Well, well, I have come on business.

TIM. Shall I call in Mr. Fish ? he's in the garden, I guess.

CODE. By no means; I am not prepared to see him yet, I can do him no good just now, and the pain would quite counter-balance the pleasure. I want to use you two for a good purpose.

NUTM. That's jest the use I like to be made on ; so go ahead.

CODE. Now tell me all about the wreck. The safe, who examined that after the fire ? Now tell me all about it.

NUTM. I and Tim, and we found the darndest vaccum you ever see. I've heerd tell about abhor-

rin' a vaccum, but nobody can abhor it as bad as I did that old sepulchre of a vault. By mighty ! there warnt a thing left.

CODE. Were there no tin boxes found containing papers ?

NUTM. Tin grannies ! We saw tew boxes that might have been tin, but ef so, it was tin that had been exposed to the twenty-third of April in arnest, for, by hokey ! it was all gone, but jest the ghost of the metal. And as to the contents, you could not identify a thing. Paper burned to ashes and rushin' into dissolvin' views at the touch, was all we saw of the contents. Tim knows it as well as I du.

CODE. Very well, you must come to town to-morrow morning and see me at my office. (*Lowering his voice to Nutm.*) By the bye, I fear Mr. Fish lacks the means of living at this moment ; come, be his treasurer for a while—(*Takes out a roll of bank-bills and hands to Nutm.*)—and expend these for the family. Make them all comfortable, including yourself and Tim. But (*putting his finger on his lips*), mum ! Not one word, my good fellow, to Mr. Fish, or any living soul, as to where the money came from, mind !

NUTM. Nor where it goes tu nuther, I reckon (*winking hard to Code*).

CODE. No, nor where it goes to my honest friend. From all that Mr. Fish has told me of you, I would trust you with a million.

NUTM. Wa'll, I ruther think half that sum would du. But ef you ever should cum such a very perlite thing unto me, I'd jest thank you tu give me suthin over half of it in specie, and not have it *all* in them darned combustibles! (*Shaking his head sorrowfully.*)

CODE. Well, well; something handsome may happen to you yet—time will show. But remember my injunction, and don't fail me to-morrow.

[*Exit Code.*

NUTM. (*Taking Tim by the ear and looking sternly at him.*) Tim, you dog! you look like a banditti at me! By hokey! I believe you would rob and murder me, if you got a chance, you cadaverous looking critter! I'm raly in danger of my life, I du solemnly believe! Where's the perlice, them "graceful *gliding* gold fishes," when there's any call for their sarvices! Here's danger of robbery, at the very least; and a riot has raged in my intestinals ever sens the world, by cumin' suddenly tu an eend, naturally produced rayther a short crop in these diggin's (*Tim laughs.*) Don't put on a hypercritical face, you darned critter! Let the long faces, like Habakuk's, administer a due portion to the long eared! (*Changing his tune.*) Cum, now, let's go, and hurray! for oysters and champaige! (*A pause, and mimicking Habakuk's nasal elocution and great solemnity.*) The eend draweth nigh! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Scene the same—Time, evening.*

Enter TIM TRUMPET.

TIM. (*Solus.*) I only want a fair share. We caught four mushrat in the pond last night, Nutmeg and I, and he made what he called an equitable division of the skins, so he took three and left me one! He pretended that he meant all the rest for the family, but he's a cute Yankee, and there's no tellin'. I am willing the family should enjoy the whole proceeds, but I won't stand any game from Nutmeg, no how! Skins are worth something, now a days. My eyes! a mushrat wasn't hardly wuth skinnin', when I was a boy. A shilling a skin don't pay for takin' it off, to say nothin' of wadin' in the water, and spashing about the pond to catch the ternal critters. Now they bring two dollars a hide! Why! the ladies *even* wears it, Nutmeg says, but I can't hardly believe it. Faugh! what a perfume! Nutmeg's stories are mighty oncartin' sometimes, I don't think.—Two dollars a hide for a mushrat skin! wa'll, every thing's up now since the war. It cost me twelve shillings for a second-hand jack-knife, t'other day, when we used to git a new one for eighteen pence. If this continers long, I shall go into bankruptcy. But Nutmeg and I are agoin' to have another hunt to-night. We see a dozen mushrat about the pond to-day. We've borrowed a dog; I've got a gun, a darned old flint-lock, though that don't go off once in ten time snappin',

and the tarnal critters laughs at it, and flap up their tails and dive under with such impudence ! but we'll give 'em fits to-night, you'll see !

(*A gentle rap at the door—Tim listens.*)

I guess it's no body ; people make more of a rap than that, when they really want to come in.

(*Another rap a little louder, but still gentle.*)

There it is agin. I don't believe in ghosts exactly, besides it's too arly in the evenin' for them ; although there may be such things. My granny told me once she seed one, but it was rayther out of the line of common ghosts, for instead of being white, it was, on the contrary, quite the reverse, and she inclined to think, it *might* have been the Old Feller himself, only it had no tail !

(*Another rap—thrice repeated, and louder.*)

I swan ! there's somebody wants to cum in, and I'll open the door.

Opens it timidly, and Enter CONTRABAND CUSSE, a colored person. Tim starts and rushes back in a fright.

It's the same granny saw, by Moses !

(*Looks over his shoulder in terror.*)

CONT. I beg pardon ; may I ask if a gentleman by the name of Mr. Job Fish, lives here ?

TIM. (*Re-assured.*) You almost frightened me, I declare. Why, yes, to be sure, if you can call this living.

CONT. I have a letter for his daughter Miss Grace, which I was directed to deliver to her personally.

TIM. (*Looking suspicious, and a pause.*) It's all fair, is it ?

CONT. Certainly ; I would like, if you please, to be allowed to deliver the letter to the lady in person.

TIM. I'll call her.

[*Exit Tim.*

(*Contraband remains standing unconcerned, with the letter in hand—a pause.*)

Enter GRACE.

GRACE. Good evening ; is it you, who have a message for me ?

CONT. (*Bowing with great respect.*) Yes ma'am, I was directed to place this in your hands by Capt. Loyal.

(*Presenting the letter, which is hastily seized by Grace.*)

GRACE. (*With emotion, instantly repressed.*) Capt. Loyal ! (*In a polite tone to Cont.*) Pray take a seat. (*Cont. bows—Grace opens the letter and reads snatches—Cont. remains standing*)—portions of the letter—

“The bearer, Contraband Cusse, saved me in our late encounter, from falling into the hands of the enemy. * * * * We had a glortous victory ! Our general, Fighting Joe, as the boys call the gallant Hooker, ordered us to take Lookout Mountain, and we did it ! fighting between earth and Heaven, above the clouds ! What heroes these Western Soldiers are ! but none lacked courage on

that glorious day. * * * Our colonel being wounded, I at length led our regiment in his stead, and just as the enemy was giving away at all points, while leading the last charge, I was struck by a musket ball (*sensation and a pause*) in the left arm, the blood flowed freely, and I was soon disabled ; a daring squad of the enemy was close upon me, when I was suddenly seized by the strong arms of a friend and borne from the midst of the fight. That friend was Contraband, the bearer of this letter, whom I send to you, begging that you will allow him to serve you till I come."

(*She looks off and seeing Contraband still standing, again begs him to be seated—he bows and stands.*)

• Wounded ! And I not there to nurse him ! Poor, dear Frank ! (*Aside.*)

Reads—“But my wound is healing rapidly, leave of absence is already granted me, and in a few days (*her countenance brightens*), I shall rush into the Model House (*lowers her voice*), clasp to my heart the model maiden, who dwells there, and soon become the model husband, of a model little wife ! God bless you, my dearest, till I come !

Your devoted

FRANK LOYAL.”

(*Folds the letter and turns to Cont.*)

I am greatly obliged by your kindness in delivering me this. You must have had some difficulty in finding us, as Capt. Loyal, doubtless, directed you

to a palace, instead of a hovel like this (*Cont. bows assent*). We have been most unfortunate. A great fire has ruined us, but I hope we shall be able to provide food and shelter for one more, and as a friend and preserver of Capt. Loyal, you will always be welcome to whatever we have it in our power to bestow (*Cont. bows his thanks*). You must need refreshments, at this late hour in the evening, so pray attend me to the next room, where a meal will be provided for you.

(*Grace leads to the next room—Cont. follows respectfully and enters.*)

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter JOB FISH, having a bottle concealed under his coat—he places it on the table—gets a tumbler from the closet and sets it by side of bottle—takes a seat at the table and soliloquizes—

FISH. (*Pours out a glass and drinks.*) I have told my first lie, and I hope my last ! My friend Brown kindly offered me assistance in my misfortunes, pressed money upon me, which I refused, saying we were not wholly destitute of means, and could manage to get on comfortably ; what a lie ! (*Drinks.*) Job Fish has become a beggar and a liar together. It has come to that ! (*A pause.*) I have a suspicion, moreover, that Code has been here, and seeing our utter destitution, went away without having an interview with me ! Can John Code thus neglect an old friend, because he is poor ? I will not believe it—and yet—

(*Shakes his head sorrowfully and pauses.*)

I am eating, whose food ? I know not ! Certainly provisions are brought in this hut, which I neither do, nor can pay for. I am living then on charity ! Job Fish, a millionaire, is a bankrupt, a liar and a pauper ! It has come to that ! The master of the *Model House* so fallen ! Whose very dog once had his country house, and a house in town ! Job Fish has become meaner than his dog ! (*Drinks.*) And he never can rise from this condition. Great nature, in her kindness, compensates for many losses, restores much that has been destroyed, repairs broken bones, heals many wounds, mends all things, indeed, but the broken heart of a man of sixty years ! (*A pause.*)

I am broken hearted, and without a single hope in the world ! (*Weeps.*) Are the damned more miserable ? Then Mercy Infinite ! help them !

(*A pause, during which he rises and paces the floor, gesticulating vehemently, finally resumes his seat.*)

What is human life but a sorry dream ? We dream of joys, which are never realized—but of sorrows, which are sure to visit us ; of riches, which flee as soon as grasped, and of honors which mock us. We are deceived by Hope, led astray by Vanity, and die at last, without having realized any happiness, to counter-balance the pains of our existence (*drinks*). Then why live on ? The pangs of death must be endured at some time, and by a wretch like me,

they are not borne in vain, since they end in deliverance and oblivion.

(*Changes to a mocking tone.*)

I could not afford to die in the Model House; *that* would have been too great a sacrifice; but I can exchange this hovel for a nameless grave, and be a gainer by the bargain! Come, then, grim *friend*, and do your office! You will find little to clog your scythe in Job Fish's meadows; the ground is poor and bare of fruit, and needs manuring by his corpse! (*Drinks.*) Come! whet your scythe, old fellow! I used to like the sound when I was a boy playing in the meadows, and I think I could enjoy it now!

(*A pause and change of tone.*)

Life is bestowed for the benefit of the subject, for his joy, his happiness; and when these cease without the hope of renewal, life should cease with them. I have a right to live, because it was given me by the Infinite to live and be happy. I have a right to die, when the motive of the gift has failed. Even dogs know so much as this, who have repeatedly committed suicide; why then, should not a wretch, who has become meaner than a dog, follow their example?

(*A pause—voices heard on the opposite side of the mill-pond.*)

TIM. There, wait a second and I'll give him fits!

(*A snap of a gun-lock, but no discharge.*)

NUTM. That infernal gun never *will* go off !
What in all natur did you bring it out for ?

(*Fish listens.*)

FISH. My honest friends are hunting muskrats.
Good souls ! How faithful they have been to me !
One of them, as I have heard it whispered, has
saved me from the last disgrace of a husband—and
I, a beggar ! have not so much as one penny to
bestow on him as a reward for his fidelity !

(*A pause and change of tone to one of great tenderness.*)

Grace, my darling daughter ! can I leave thee !
(*A pause.*) Thou wilt have in future, if I live, to
be my servant ; to employ those delicate hands in
performing acts of the meanest drudgery, in order
to support a worthless old father, growing worse
every day, and looking on from his easy chair in
the chimney corner, and seeing thy pure young
blood wasted for him ! I'll not endure it, by
Heaven ! (*A pause.*)

And William, my glorious boy ! (*A pause.*)
Ah ! I shall not leave thee, but rather meet thy
brave and gentle spirit in a better world !

Then farewell, sweet Grace ! and William, I come
to thee !

(*He rushes to the window—leaps out—a splash is heard in the
water of the pond, and voices sound there.*)

NUTM. There ! that's suthin' rather biggern a
mushrat now. Tim, the boat ! Now for it, help !

Pull him up ! Pull him in ! There now, row, row !
and let us see who it is ! (*A pause.*)

*Enter NUTM. and TIM bringing in the body of FISH,
apparently drowned, with, however, signs of re-
maining life—MRS. FISH, GRACE, SUSAN and
CONTRABAND, rush in—all stand over the body,
and GRACE embracing it tenderly, when the
curtain falls.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Lapse of a month—Scene, the same—kitchen
of the hovel—Curtain rising reveals GRACE alone,
sewing.*

*Enter JOHN CODE, with a smiling face, addressing
GRACE.*

CODE. Good morning, my dear Miss Grace !
Never was a finer day, nor more cheerful prospects,
than now open on us. How is your poor dear
father ?

GRACE. (*Rising, surprised, and extending her
hand.*) I thank you, Mr. Code, he seems to be a
good deal better, although still confined to his bed.
He suffers more in his mind than body now.

CODE. I am glad to hear that his body is nearly
well, for I am not a physician of the body, but
I rather think I have it in my power to minister to

his mind ; although I may not be as expert in the healing art as your old lover, Dr. Similibus (*looking archly at her*).

GRACE. Pray do not mention that name, lest my father, who is lying in the next room, should hear. He raves at the thought of either Similibus or Softly.

CODE. Then let me have done with all nonsense, and proceed to the serious purpose of my visit. Listen, dear Grace ! You know that your father's fortune was all invested in government bonds, and that they were all consumed by the fire. Well, I made a bold attempt to regain them. I visited this hovel, unknown to you ; had an interview with Nutmeg and Tim Trumpet ; got at the facts ; had them visit me at my office ; took their affidavits of all the facts respecting the fire, the condition of the safe and contents after it ; added my own evidence as to the date, number and amount of the lost bonds ; showed that your poor dear father had, from excess of patriotism, put his whole fortune at the service of the government, even against my advice ; showed that he had given up his only son to the service of his country, who was then languishing, if not dying, in Andersonville prison ; that your father was reduced to actual want, and living in a miserable hut, after having occupied the noblest mansion that ever adorned the beautiful shores of the Hudson ; and lastly, but not leastly by any means (*tapping Grace's*

*shoulder), I added that the affianced husband of his only daughter—whom, of course, I represented to be a model of grace and goodness (*archly*)—was the brave and gallant Capt. Loyal, who had won such distinguished laurels at the battle of Lookout Mountain. Was not this a pretty fair case, think you ? Well, I laid all this, and much more to the same purpose, before the Secretary of the Treasury, with a request that new bonds, of the precise date and amount of those destroyed, should be issued to that good patriot and honest man, JOB FISH, your honored father and my brave old client and friend. And, will you believe it ? my lawyer's dream was realized ; the thing was done ; and I have the desired documents, in a new tin box, ready to be placed in a new safe, which I hope will never be proved by fire. That is a fact I would be glad to waive the proof of, as we lawyers say.*

GRACE. (*Looking bewildered by the rapid and grateful statement of Code.*) But we have no place—no safe—we have nothing !

CODE. I beg pardon ; but you never was so much mistaken in your dear little life. You have one of the most beautiful places on the Hudson ; a genuine *Model House* this time—except that it is minus a *chapel*, I believe.

GRACE. We have such a house !

CODE. Yes ; and all furnished besides—ready for occupation this day—this hour—this minute ! Pray

let me explain : I said all your bonds were in the box. That was a lawyer's story. I should have excepted so many of them as were required to pay for the purchase of the new house and furniture ; which house, so furnished, is that delightful cottage you have admired always, the one next adjoining your neighbor Brown's.

GRACE. Thanks, ten thousand thanks, dear, dear Mr. Code (*rushing up and kissing him on the forehead*) ; our noble, faithful friend and benefactor ! How can we ever repay you for all this goodness ?

CODE. My dear Grace, you should never thank a lawyer. Be sure the rascal has always taken good care of himself ; and I am provided for to my heart's content—be sure of that.

GRACE. Provided for ! *paid*, mean you ?

CODE. The tear of gratitude on that fair cheek which I just beheld, and the gladness I shall soon witness in your dear old father's face, I am content to accept as my lawyer's fees. (*A pause.*) But, now to business. I infer from what you say that your father is well enough to be removed. There is a litter at the door ; you have enough to man it ; put my dear old friend upon it, and have him carried in triumph to the new Model House. I will not see him *here*, where I should regret to behold my worst enemy ; but I will soon visit him, with pleasure, *there*. Meanwhile, God bless you !

[*Exit Code.*

Enter Tim and Nutm.

GRACE. Bring in the litter at the door, if you please, Tim. (*To Nutm.*) Please see that my father is carefully borne on that litter to the cottage adjoining Mr. Brown's, which is to be our future home.

NUTM. Thunder ! You don't mean it !

GRACE. I do. We will all help ; and now please do as I desired.

(*The litter is placed—Fish is brought from the adjoining room and placed tenderly upon it—Cont. and Susan, with Tim and Nutm., carry him out—Mrs. Fish and Grace attending.*)

FISH. (*Starting up.*) What does this mean ? Where are you carrying me ? Are you all crazy ?

GRACE. (*Bending over him soothingly.*) It is all right, my poor, dear father. We are carrying you to a larger and worthier house, where you can be better nursed, and will soon recover.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE II.—*A room in the new cottage—spacious, neat and comfortable. Present, FISH, nearly restored to health, and GRACE, in fine spirits.*

GRACE. My dear father all is restored to us again, by the ingenuity and kindness of our excellent friend, Mr. Code, as I explained to you a little while ago ; and he will soon be here to congratulate you and bring with him the restored bonds. I am sure he will be very welcome.

FISH. Thrice welcome ! He is faithful and just to the last degree ; intelligent and quick to serve a friend or client ; nay, I think he has always served his client first, and has often forgotten to serve himself afterwards. But I am determined that he shall not skulk from a compensation now. I have made up my mind to give him a tythe of all he has rescued from the wreck of my fortune, and that will amount to some fifty thousand dollars. He is not rich, and never will be, unless somebody holds him, while another thrusts money in his pocket. There are few such lawyers, and not many such men.

Enter CODE with a box containing the securities, &c. ;

FISH advances eagerly to meet him, and shaking him warmly by the hand, exclaims—

My noble friend and benefactor !

CODE. Tut-tut-tut ! The more you say of friend, and the less of benefactor, the better ; so not another word of that. Here are all the bonds, except what were given for this estate, the title deeds of which are also here (*raising the lid of the box*). Please to look and see that all is right.

(Fish takes up some of the bonds and arranges them.)

FISH. They say that virtue is its own reward ; but as a lawyer has no virtue, you know, it is difficult to see how he is to be paid, unless he gets a fee.

CODE. Pray do not confound me with your metaphysics. We are friends, and I have done you a friendly service.

FISH. You are a lawyer, and I am your much indebted client, having a conscience, and desirous of relieving it from an exceeding sense of obligation. But we are also friends, and I would cement our friendship by acts of justice. Unrequited obligations soon break the ties of friendship, and the contents of that box cannot tempt me to swerve from the right. Those contents rightly belong to both of us. Here is your share (*offering him some of the bonds*) ; take it, for your family, if not for for yourself, and if not for your or their sake, then for mine ; for I cannot rest in peace till I have made you a fitting return for your inestimable services. You hesitate ; take them, or be no longer friend of mine ! (*Code accepts them.*)

(*A bell rings—Contraband goes to the door and is heard to exclaim.*)

CONT. My dear master ! God bless you !

They shake hands cordially—CONT. passes out, and CAPT. LOYAL, in military costume, advances, with the coat sleeve of his left arm empty—he greets all heartily, and GRACE with affection, whose hand he kisses.

FISH. Welcome to our hearts and home ! my glorious friend ! We have heard of your brave

exploits on the field of battle, and are proud of your fame ; but, alas (*looking at the empty sleeve*), we had not heard all !

GRACE. Dear Frank ! (*Observing the sleeve for the first, starts with surprise and horror.*) You did not tell me of this in your precious letter. Oh ! had I known it, no distance would have—

(*Becoming faint she is supported by Capt. Loyal.*)

LOYAL. Nay, my sweet Grace ; it is too much, even for you to know it now. I purposely forbore to hasten bad news to the ear of one I so much loved !

(*Dinner is announced—the doors of the dining-room open—Loyal supports Grace thither.*) [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*An ante-room to a chamber in the new cottage—TIM crosses, carrying a server with phials and remnants of food and drink, as from a sick room—he soliloquizes.*

TIM. I'm glad he refused these (*touching the phials*), for I raly don't think they're strength'nin' ; although we've got a new doctor, and he don't give much medsin nuther. He talks larnedly, as though he knew something. "*Fist meader tricks natury,*"* says he. (I think that's what he said—'twas mighty big soundin', any way.) Wa'll, the *fist* won't do for the boy yit—he ain't strong enough to use the *fist* ; but the *meader tricks* I like. I du believe if

* *Vis medicatrix naturæ* (meaning).

the patient was out in the *meader* with Nutmeg and me, where everything is so *natury*, and would jest stir hay a little, then repose on the sweet grass—he needn’t mow, for I don’t think he could do that any better than use his *fist*—then listen to the bob’links, so natury, sweet and purty, or, what would probably do him more good yet, look longingly over the fence to Mr. Brown’s, and hear Sary sing them sweet anthems of hern—for she don’t sing any lively tunes no more now—why, I think ’twould do him a sight of good. (*Looking at the server.*) Wa’ll, there ain’t much of the spring chicken left, any how, and it was rayther a sprightly chicken, too, for this season’s layin’—and cum from Mr. Brown’s. Mighty ! how he laid into it when I told him it was one of Mr. Brown’s. I thought he’d enymost git a bone in his throat, he eat so fast. Jumpin’ Jingo ! don’t he need to eat, though ? He looks like a new barn just raised ; there’s a frame there, and that’s all. This comes of sojerin’. *I* didn’t list ; and when I see what’s left of poor William, I congratulate myself on having sarved my country in a modester and more peaceful capacity. Why, they say that at the Andersonville Hotel, kept by the firm of Jefferson Davis & Co., raw rat—a shade too ripe, as the cooks say—was sarved up—wa’ll, not daily, for that would have been a leetle too extravagant for so thriving and economical a consarn—but once in three or four days or so ; and that the beverage was water sea-soned with mud, carrion and other combustibles ! I

rayther think William would have preferred dining to hum at his father's plain table. But I may be wanted below. [Exit.

Scene shifts, and discovers a bed with the emaciated skeleton of WILLIAM FISH upon it — GRACE sitting by his side, plying her needle and watching — The patient sleeps at first, and waking at length, GRACE bends over him and speaks.

GRACE. My poor dear brother, I hope you feel better now. You look a good deal brighter, and we mean to have you sit up a little to-day.

WILLIAM. (*Faintly and reaching out his hand, which Grace takes tenderly in hers.*) I am a great deal better ; food and shelter are all I need to make me quite well. How kind you all are to me ! And you, dearest sister ! I never open my eyes but I see you at my bedside.

GRACE. (*Examining his hand, with emotion.*) Dear brother, do you remember when you went to the war, and we took our last embrace, I placed on your finger a gold ring with your name and mine engraven upon it ?

WILLIAM. I never shall forget it.

GRACE. It is not upon this poor withered hand now (*pauses—looking at the hand, with emotion.*)

WILLIAM. No, dear sister. I was starving in that accursed place where the enemy confined us, without shelter, food, clothing, or even water which the

meanest beast would drink, though dying of thirst—
(labors to speak, and having risen from his pillow in his excitement, falls back—Grace tenderly guarding him).

GRACE. Be calm, dear brother; I see it is not safe for you to speak of this. Tell me when you get stronger. (*A pause.*)

WILLIAM. (*Lifting his head a little.*) And not until death seemed to be upon me did I part with that ring, which was the last earthly thing I had left of you or home. (*Weeps and falls back on his pillow—Grace wiping away his tears—lays her head tenderly on the same pillow and weeps.*) But at length—and it is the last I remember until I was in the hands of friends—I gave that precious ring—the token of your sweet affection—to a fellow prisoner in exchange for the decayed carcass of a dead rat! (*Falling back on his pillow exhausted.*)

GRACE. Oh, God of mercy! My poor dear brother!

(*Sinks on his pillow, weeping—A long pause, when William lifts his head again and raises on his elbow, with the assistance of Grace.*)

WILLIAM. It saved my life! I was exchanged next day; and God be thanked, I am now in your dear arms—at home—in Paradise! (*A pause.*) Is there not some one entering? (*Looking toward the door.*) It is—it is Sarah! (*Falling back.*)

Enter SARAH.

(Grace rushes forward, takes Sarah Brown by the hand, kisses her, and leads her gently to the bedside—Sarah stands awhile in silence, gazing on William, and falls fainting in the arms of Grace, who lays her partly on the foot of the bed, and holding her—William rouses.)

WILLIAM. Where is Sarah? Will she not look at me?

SARAH. (Recovering and standing over him—lays her hand on his head, and turning the hair from his forehead, stoops and kisses it, with great emotion, exclaiming : William !

WILLIAM. Dearest Sarah! your poor soldier boy is returned—what is left of him—to live for you, and to love and bless you evermore!

SARAH. Thank Heaven!

Enter CAPT. LOYAL, who pays his respects to the ladies, goes to the bed, takes WILLIAM by the hand, embraces him—the latter seeing the empty sleeve with great emotion.

LOYAL. My noble boy—my brother—welcome, welcome home! I got the start of you in coming from the wars; not that I ran home, but really I came quickly—attracted by more than magnetism (pointing to Grace).

WILLIAM. Yes; she is yours, we all agree; and I regard you as twice my brother now: once by your love of my dear sister, and once again by the sacrifice you have made in the service of your country

(*pointing to the armless sleeve*). But you are alive and well, and I am resolved soon to be the same. Pray let me sit up (*Capt. Loyal helps him*). I am a good deal better now. Sarah, dearest love, that kiss which you have refrained from giving me.

SARAH. Nay, I gave you one long ago.

WILLIAM. On my forehead; but now the lips. (*Kissing*.) I shall march bravely this very day—oh! I am so much better; and I shall dance to-morrow!

[*Scene closes.*

SCENE IV.—*A room in the new cottage—Mr. and Mrs. Wisp being guests.*

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Wisp.

MRS. WISP. (*Surveying the room.*) I like this well! But I hope Mr. Fish has learned wisdom and prudence by all that has transpired of late, and that his wife has recovered her wits, even if she should still lapse in her grammar and rhetoric.

MR. WISP. Very few, indeed, are so fortunate, so very happy, if I may be permitted, as to possess a wife so inestimable—a—and I should say, so superlatively grand—a—and, as it were, imposing, as my own and only; who never requires—a—and, indeed, seems not to be susceptible of any improvement whatsoever. (*Bowing deferentially.*)

MRS. WISP. You are aware that I seldom trouble you with any advisory consultations on family affairs. But now my daughter, my only child; you being

her father, with some claim perhaps to take an interest in her—so at least the world considers—

WISP. Thank you, my dearest. I am most happy of that graceful admission, in respect of the—a—paternal parentage of Lavinia. Indeed, I—a—may say, I am truly delighted, at being considered—a—her father. It is so complimentary to be conceded to have had—a—any sort of partnership with a being of the—a—feminine persuasion, who is so truly august—a—and, as it were, sublime—and—a—at the same time beautiful—as my own dear Mrs. Wisp !

MRS. WISP. I was saying, that, as her father, perhaps you had some wish respecting *my* daughter's disposition in marriage. Now, ever since the fire at the Model House and Lavinia's rescue by Wooden Nutmeg—think of *Lavinia Wisp Nutmeg*, if you have a passion for names—the girl has taken kindly to her rescuer—

WISP. (*Interrupting.*) My mind, if you please to permit, is already made up. I would not be hasty, or, in your presence—a—at all prominent; but as a simple minded male man—a—my impulse is—and you have reason to know that I am the very creature—a—of impulse; I say, my impulse was, and is, to give Lavinia to the man—a—that saved her life, and who, I think—if I may be permitted—earned her, by the risk of his own.

(*Looking rather timidly at his wife.*)

MRS. WISP. Why, he has not a dollar! And his name—Phœbus—what a name!

Enter LAVINIA on the arm of NUTM.

LAVINIA. Dear mother and father! I beg to present for your kindest regard, my preserver and dearest friend, Mr. Nutmeg. Will you be so kind as to allow his claim? He pretends he has a right to me, and must have me for his dear little wife—and—a—I have no objections, I am sure.

(*Wisp bows and assents by gestures, looking fearfully at Mrs. Wisp, who draws up in grand, forbidding style.*)

NUTM. (*To Mrs. Wisp.*) Ef you object tu my style o'talk, or any thing in that line, I can easily remove that *injection*, as Mrs. Fish used to say, but don't du it any more, cause she and I have been in a class together, studying grammar and rhetoric, like all natur for the last fortnight, and in a couple of weeks more, if nothing happens, we shall be quite civilized, I expect. So *that* objection fails, and you take nothing by your commotion, as the lawyers say. But *perhaps* you object tu my name. Wa'll, there might have been more on it, for my venerable parients might have added *Grater*, for my sur name (*aside and winking*). That's a good un, and I'll pun the critter into fits, ef she don't consent.

(*Mrs. Wisp still stands on her awful dignity.*)

Wa'll, after all, my name aint so very bad. It's tarnation spicy, the sur part; and even Habakuk never

objected ag'in the Christian name, altho' it does sound suthin' like *Woden*, that old cuss of a heathen god, that we read of.

(*Mrs. Wisp is shocked.*)

Wa'll, I see that you don't like me any better yet. Now, it aint so bad a name, Wooden Nutmeg aint. I've seen the time, when I was a boy playing in the meaders, that I'd gin half a dozen *Wisps* for one *Nutmeg*, and suthin' to boot besides !

MRS. WISP. Pray, sirrah, don't reflect on that name ! In fact, it is *not* my name. *Blandina Bludgeon* was my name, and *that* I fancy was neither in the *Wisp* nor *Nutmeg* line.

NUTM. But it's ruther *spicy* though !

MRS. WISP. Of course I have made a sacrifice in my marriage. I am called Mrs. Wisp now, and cannot object even to a Wooden Nutmeg.

(*Looks at Wisp with contempt mingled with grief—Fish appears at the back of the stage.*)

Still I have a right to look to the material interests of my daughter, when bestowing her hand in marriage, as I did for myself, when I united my fortune with Mr. Wisp.

WISP. I beg pardon; what *fortune* did I—a—understand—you united with mine? If I may be permitted—a—

MRS. WISP. Not dirty acres, nor filthy greenbacks, reeking with the fumes of tobacco; but I brought

to your intellectually impoverished house, talent, dignity, learning, mind !

(Drawing herself up wonderfully—*Fish, having heard the latter part of this conversation, comes forward.*)

Enter Fish.

FISH. I hope this matter may be adjusted to the satisfaction of all parties.

(Putting his hand on Nutmeg's shoulder.)

No one who knows the value of my friend here, can object to his *nature*. But some have an objection to his *name*. Let me settle all difficulty in that respect, by assuring you, that *Wooden Nutmeg* is only a nickname, bestowed on him when a boy, for his eastern style of elocation, which, I confess, seems not altogether to have worn off yet. However, his real name is *Augustus Noble*, and his nature is far nobler than his name.

(*Mrs. Wisp partially relents, but still stands out.*)

LAVINIA. My dear Augustus ! now I am happy ; for to say the truth, I did not like your old *name* quite as well as I did its owner.

WISP. (*Taking Nutm. by the hands and shaking them dreadfully.*) May I be permitted, my dear Augustus—a—Noble—to congratulate you ? Nothing can be wanting now to complete—a—

(*Looking timidly at Mrs. Wisp.*)

FISH. Something still is wanting. Mrs. Wisp is concerned about Mr. Noble's pecuniary circum-

stances. Here is a deed of as fine a farm as lies in the county of Westchester :

(*Holding Nutm. the instrument.*)

and here is enough of Uncle Sam's securities to make a man of your sagacity and prudence independent for the remainder of your life.

(*Holding Nutm. the bonds—Mrs. Wisp assenting, Fish takes Lavinia's hand and places it in Nutmeg's.*)

Now, my dear Lavinia, take to your heart of hearts, *your and my Life Preserver!*

(*Nutm. kisses her hand and bows to Mr. Fish.*)

NUTM. (*Aside.*) That *life preserver* is good—very near as well as I could have dun myself! [Exeunt.

SCENE V.—*A handsome drawing-room in the new cottage*
—*Time, evening.*

Enter MR. FISH and MRS. BROWN; MR. BROWN and MRS. FISH, the latter much subdued; CAPT. LOYAL and GRACE; WILLIAM and SARAH, the former still emaciated and pale; NUTMEG and LAVINIA; FREELOVE and MRS. WISP, the husband, MR. WISP, following meekly behind—CONTRABAND, TIM and SUSAN in waiting—A band of music—Couples arrrnge for a dance—CONT., TIM and SUSAN approach the front—FISH comes forward and stands near them.

FISH. We are happy at last! And amid all the scenes which we have passed through, I have learned:

that the largest mansion may shelter as much misery, and as much vice, as the meanest hovel ; that extremes of grandeur and poverty are alike to be avoided ; that a medium in houses, as in all things, is best ; and that such a cottage as this, with such faithful and attached dependents as these (*pointing to Tim, Cont. and Susan*), for whom I hope I have provided to their heart's content (*they all bow a joyful assent*), is really and truly the *Model House*.

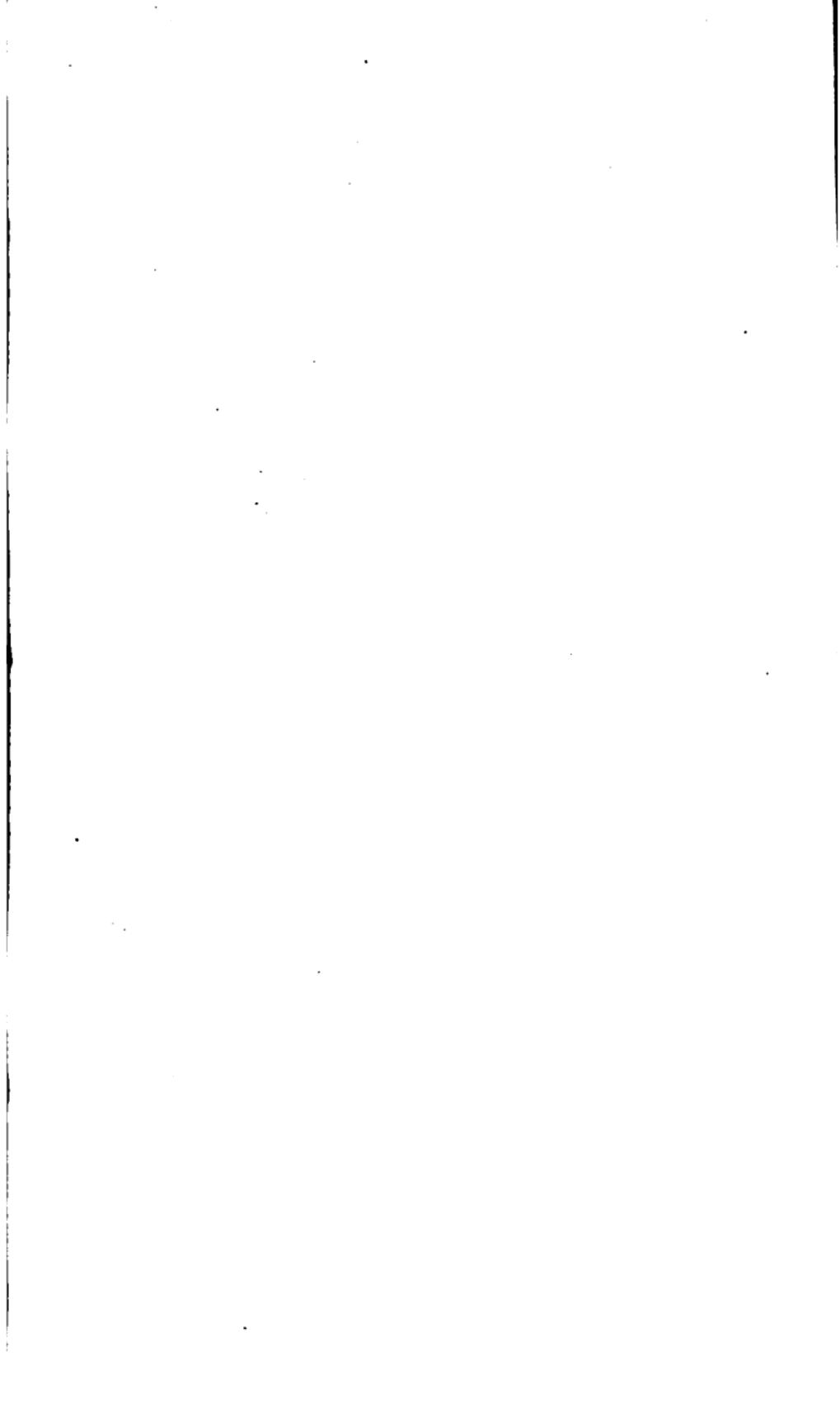
I have learned, moreover, never to despair ; but to remember, amid all the changes of fortune, that we are in the hands of a *Supreme Divine Power*, which rules

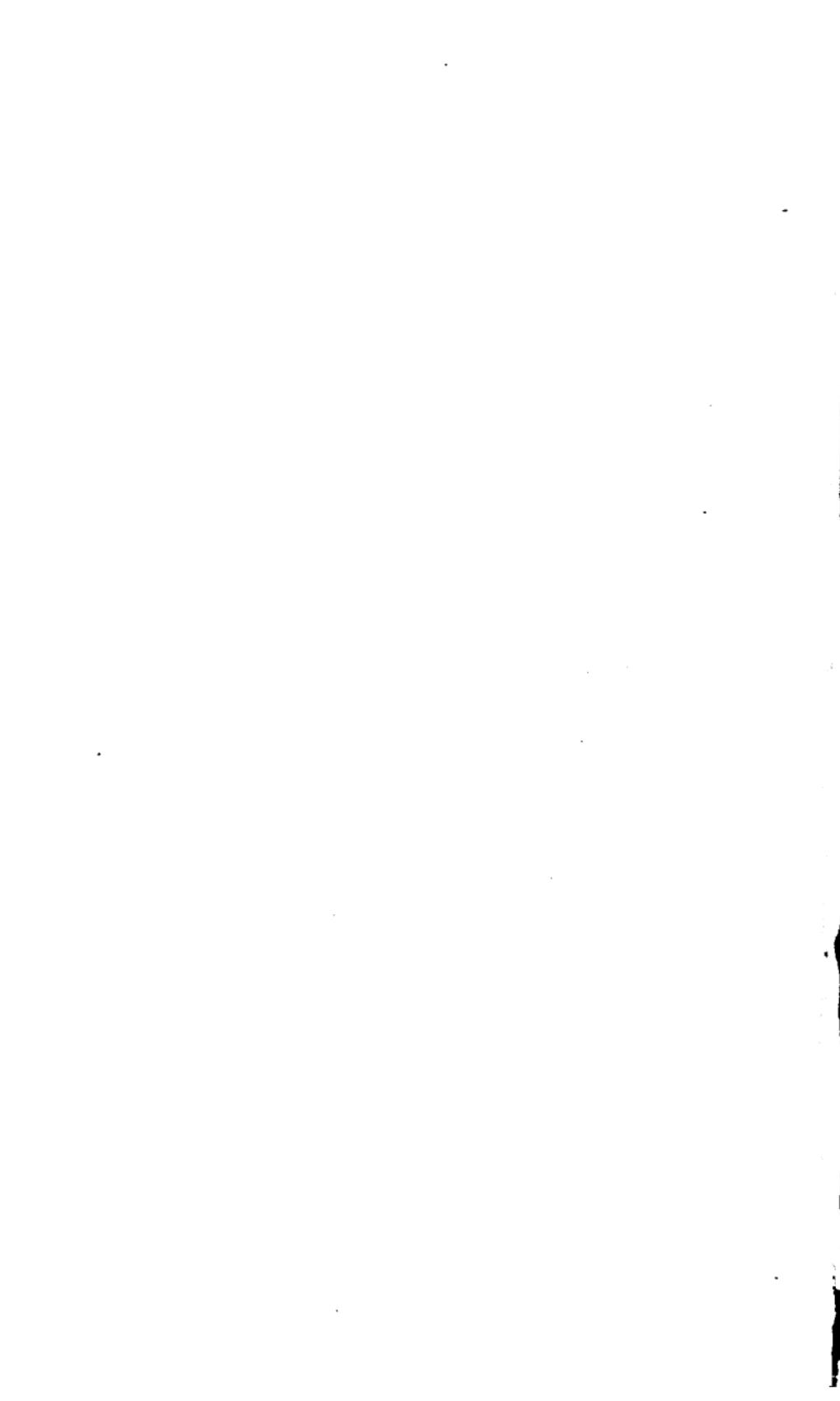
“—a Destiny that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will.”

(*Nutmeg coming forward with Lavinia on his arm.*)

NUTM. And I tu have larned suthing, though, perhaps, you thought me cute enough before : that a mite of honesty is worth more than any quantity of hypocrisy ; and that I'd ruther have my little *Wisp*, than the biggest kind of haystack. (*Aside.*) I reckon that pun is *comparatively* good (*winking at audiencee*).

(*Music and dancing, amid which, the curtain falls.*)





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